TEACHING OF ENGLISH IN ENGLAND

Report of the Departmental Committee
by the President of the Board of Education

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THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH IN ENGLAND

BEING THE REPORT OF THE DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE APPOINTED BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO INQUIRE INTO THE POSITION OF ENGLISH IN THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM OF ENGLAND.

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THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH IN ENGLAND.

REPORT

OF THE

DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE APPOINTED BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION TO INQUIRE INTO THE POSITION OF ENGLISH IN THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM OF ENGLAND

(May 2nd, 1919.)

REFERENCE.

To inquire into the position occupied by English (Language and Literature) in the educational system of England, and to advise how its study may best be promoted in schools of all types, including Continuation Schools, and in Universities and other Institutions of Higher Education, regard being had to—

(1) the requirements of a liberal education;
(2) the needs of business, the professions, and public services; and
(3) the relation of English to other studies.

LIST OF MEMBERS.

Sir HENRY NEWBOLT, LL.D., D.Litt. (Chairman).
Mr. JOHN BAILEY.
Miss K. M. BAINES, H.M. Inspector.
Mr. F. S. BOAS, LL.D.
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Miss G. PERRIE WILLIAMS, D. de l'Université, Paris.
Mr. J. DOVER WILSON, H.M. Inspector.

Secretary: Mr. J. E. HALES, H.M. Inspector.

To the RIGHT HONOURABLE H. A. L. FISHER, M.P.,
President of the Board of Education.

SIR,

THE Committee appointed by you in May 1919 beg to report as follows :—

PREFACE.

Your Committee have sat on 42 days, and, in addition, a Sub-Committee appointed by them to assist in the drawing up of this Report have met on 18 days.

We have received oral evidence from 102 witnesses, of whom a complete list is given in Appendix I. We have also received valuable information in reply to specific questions which we addressed to representative schools of every type, to all the English and certain other Universities, to a number of Commercial and Industrial Firms, and to several Local Education Authorities. We have not thought it necessary to invite evidence from witnesses representing the English Association, as we consider the views of the Association to be sufficiently represented by our Chairman and other members.

Our terms of reference do not include Wales, and, though we have heard certain evidence from Wales, our Report throughout assumes English to be the vernacular, and is intended to refer to England only.

We wish to acknowledge our indebtedness to our Secretary, Mr. J. E. Hales. During the whole of the two years over which our inquiry has extended, his energy and tact have been unfailing, and we have drawn constantly upon his experience as an Officer of the Board of Education. But his services have gone considerably beyond this. By his wide knowledge of English Literature and the history of English education, and by the personal qualities which he devoted to the work, he has added to our resources and lightened our labours in a degree which we remember and record with no ordinary pleasure.

CHAPTER I.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION.

1. We are instructed by the terms of our reference to consider and report upon the position of English in the educational system of the country, that is to say, the position of a part in relation to the whole in which it is included. If the instruction had gone no further, it might have been reasonable to suppose that the present educational system of the country was to be accepted as a fixed framework and that our concern with English was limited to the manner in which it is fitted, or should be fitted, into its place in that framework. But the terms of reference continue as follows :—" regard being had to the requirements of a liberal education, the needs of business, the professions, and public services, and the relation of English to other studies." Not only are these words significant in themselves, as giving a wide scope to our consideration of English, but we have found almost from the outset that they have imposed upon us a task at once more extensive and more complex than we had foreseen. As we considered the growing mass of evidence before us, it became more and more impossible to take a narrow view of the inquiry, to regard it as concerned only with one subordinate part of an already existing structure. A declaration that in our present system English holds but an unsatisfactory position would have been, we saw, valueless; for however elaborately set forth it would not have taken account of the most significant part of the facts and judgments laid before us. The inadequate conception of the teaching of English in this country is not a separate defect which can be separately remedied. It is due to a more far-reaching failure—the failure to conceive the full meaning and possibilities of national education as a whole, and that failure

again is due to a misunderstanding of the educational values to be found in the different regions of mental activity, and especially to an underestimate of the importance of the English language and literature. It is not required of us that we should propose in detail a complete scheme of national education, but we are compelled to indicate certain principles which must form the basis of any such scheme; because the recognition of these principles is an indispensable condition of success in providing for the best use of English as a means of intercourse and of education. Our position may be compared to that of an architect called in to advise upon what can be done with a stone which the builders have hitherto rejected. We find that the stone is invaluable; but also that the arch is too faulty to admit it. We propose to meet not one but two imperative needs by rebuilding the arch and using our stone as keystone of the whole—the use for which it, and no other, is available.

2. Before we go further we must give a brief indication of the converging lines of thought along which we have been forced to this conclusion. First, we have been struck by the fact that, although much labour and thought have been expended and many changes made, almost all in the right direction, it is still true that in this country we have no general or national scheme of education. It is understood to be the duty of the State to see that every child shall, during a certain number of years, receive an education, but the meaning of this is not generally understood. Neither by tradition nor by effective instruction has the general body of citizens any clear idea of the benefit to be conferred. To some the word education means reading, writing, and arithmetic; to others, almost any kind of information. Of those who understand it to imply instruction by skilled teachers, the great majority still identify it with the imparting of information, though some consider this largely useless, while others value it as a possible means to obtaining increased wages or some other vocational advantage. In general, it may not unfairly be said that education is regarded as a suitable occupation for the years of child-

hood, with the further object of equipping the young in some vague and little understood way for the struggle of adult existence in a world of material interests. The existence of other ideals does not diminish the confusion. Sections of the community, for social and intellectual reasons, have persisted in maintaining schools and universities for the special treatment of their own sons and daughters. The education which they have thus provided has, in general, been superior to that provided by the State, but it has been the privilege of a minority only, and has widened the mental distance between classes in England. Matthew Arnold, using the word in its true sense, claimed that "Culture unites classes." He might have added that a system of education which disunites classes cannot be held worthy of the name of a national culture. In this respect we have even fallen away from an earlier and better tradition. Many of our great Public Schools, as the Natural Science Committee have pointed out,* though founded originally in the interest of poor scholars, are not open to poor scholars to-day because the scholarships and exhibitions which they offer are not, as a matter of fact, within the reach of boys from the elementary schools. The age at which they are competed for, and the subjects which they require, make them available only for those who have received an expensive special preparation. We may recognise that it is at present more difficult than it was some centuries ago to educate the children of rich and poor side by side in the same schools, but this makes it only the more to be regretted that there is no source of unity to be found in the teaching provided by the different types of school. If there were any common fundamental idea of education, any great common divisions of the curriculum, which would stand out in such a way as to obliterate, or even to soften, the lines of separation between the young of different classes, we might hope to find more easily the way to bridge the social chasms which divide us.

* Report of the Prime Minister's Committee on the Teaching of Natural Science, § 23.

For this purpose it must be remembered that classical studies are not available; however effective they may have proved in one type of school, they cannot be made use of universally. Actually, by an unfortunate irony of circumstance they have been regarded as the possession of a privileged class, and not as a pathway open to all possessed of literary ability or scholarship.

3. A second fact which has impressed us is this. Though there has been a common failure in this country to realise the true nature and effect of education, there has been at the same time a common instinctive perception of one aspect of our ill success. The English are a nation with a genius for practical life, and the chief criticism directed, whether by parents or pupils, against our present system, is a practical one; it amounts, when coherently stated, to a charge that our education has for a long time past been too remote from life. We have come to the conclusion that this charge is supported by the evidence. However men may differ as to the relative importance of different objects in life, the majority are right in feeling that education should directly bear upon life, that no part of the process should be without a purpose intelligible to everyone concerned. At a later stage we shall endeavour to trace the historical process by which the present divorce between education and reality has come about; in the meantime we note the results. A quasi-scientific theory has long been accepted that the process of education is the performance of compulsory hard labour, a "grind" or "stiffening process," a "gritting of the teeth" upon hard substances with the primary object not of acquiring a particular form of skill or knowledge but of giving the mind a general training and strengthening. This theory has now been critically examined and declared to be of less wide application than was thought. Its abandonment would do much to smooth the road of education, it would make it possible to secure for the child a living interest and a sense of purpose in his work, and it would replace the old wasteful system of compulsion and mere obedience by a community of interest between pupil and teacher.

4. This community of interest would be felt instinctively and immediately by the pupil, but it is very necessary that it should be consciously understood by all those responsible for the education of the young. It must be realised that education is not the same thing as information, nor does it deal with human knowledge as divided into so-called subjects. It is not the storing of compartments in the mind, but the development and training of faculties already existing. It proceeds, not by the presentation of lifeless facts, but by teaching the student to follow the different lines on which life may be explored and proficiency in living may be obtained. It is, in a word, guidance in the acquiring of experience. Under this general term are included experiences of different kinds; those which are obtained, for example, by manual work, or by the orderly investigation of matter and its qualities. The most valuable for all purposes are those experiences of human relations which are gained by contact with human beings. This contact may take place in the intercourse of the classroom, the playground, the home, and the outer world, or solely in the inner world of thought and feeling, through the personal records of action and experience known to us under the form of literature. The intercourse of the classroom should be for the student, especially in the earlier stages of development, the most valuable of all, since it is there that he will come under the influence of not one but two personal forces, namely, the creative power of the author whose record he is studying, and the appreciative judgment of the teacher who is introducing him to the intimacy of a greater intellect.

5. Not only must the true nature of education be clearly understood, but it will be a matter of equal importance that the teacher, at any rate, and the student, as soon as may be, should have clear and well founded ideas about morals, science and art. They must feel and, as far as possible, understand the direct interest of these as bearing upon practical life and the equipment for it. It has long been accepted, and at the present day it has been reiterated with great force by such

teachers as the Dean of St. Paul's and Mr. Clutton Brock, that the three main motives which actuate the human spirit are the love of goodness, the love of truth and the love of beauty. It is certainly under heads corresponding to these that education must be divided into the training of the will (morals), the training of the intellect (science) and the training of the emotions (expression or creative art). In school, therefore, science must be, for teacher and for student, the methodical pursuit of truth and the conquest of the physical world by human intelligence and skill. Literature, the form of art most readily available, must be handled from the first as the mos direct and lasting communication of experience by man to men. It must never be thought of or represented as an ornament, an excrescence, a mere pastime or an accomplishment; above all, it must never be treated as a field of mental exercise remote from ordinary life. The sphere of morals in school life is limited by practical considerations with which we cannot here deal, but it is evident that if science and literature can be ably and enthusiastically taught, the child's natural love of goodness will be strongly encouraged and great progress may be made in the strengthening of the will. The vast import ance to a nation of moral training would alone make it imperative that education shall be regarded as experience and shall be kept in the closest contact with life and personal relations.

6. The facts and needs of the situation as briefly outlined above did not form the starting point of our inquiry, but they forced themselves irresistibly upon our attention from the moment when we first began to consider the present position of English in the educational system of the country. From the evidence laid before us it became speedily clear that in many schools of all kinds and grades that part of the teaching which dealt directly with English was often regarded as being inferior in importance, hardly worthy of any substantial place in the curriculum, and a suitable matter to be entrusted

to any member of the staff who had some free time at his disposal. It would be natural to suppose that there must be some good reason for this neglect, but on the other hand one of the most obvious facts of which we have to take account is that education in English is, for all Englishmen, a matter of the most vital concern, and one which must, by its very nature, take precedence of all other branches of learning. It is self-evident that until a child has acquired a certain command of the native language, no other educational development is even possible. If progress is not made at one time in the region of arithmetic or history or geography, the child merely remains backward in that respect, and the deficiency can be made up later. But a lack of language is a lack of the means of communication and of thought itself. Moreover, among the vast mass of the population, it is certain that if a child is not learning good English he is learning bad English, and probably bad habits of thought; and some of the mischief done may never afterwards be undone. Merely from this point of view English is plainly no matter of inferior importance, nor even one among the other branches of education, but the one indispensable preliminary and foundation of all the rest.

7. It is probable that no one would be found to dissent from this proposition, in which the meaning of the word English is limited to the language itself as a means of communication. The word, however, in our present inquiry has other and wider meanings, and these must now be brought into consideration. Even as a means of communication a language may be treated in two ways, as practical speech and as a scientific study. With regard to the first of these, the position is clear. With regard to the second, it can be made clear at once. It has been the custom in the past to attempt the teaching of the Classics from two points of view simultaneously. The student has been required during one and the same lesson to treat the work of a classical author from the

point of view of science and of art; in a passage of the *Aeneid*, for example, to study simultaneously the structure and idiom of the Latin language and the personal expression of Virgil's mind in his poetry. This made the task a severe and distracting one for both teacher and pupil; success was only achieved in a small minority of cases. In the rest failure was made almost inevitable by the fact that the scientific study of the language, though to the student far less interesting than the poetical narrative, appears to the teacher in general to be an easier task, involving less personal effort on his own part. To give out information and insist on its being accurately registered is an almost mechanical matter; to convey anything of the feeling and thought which are the life of literature the teacher must have been touched by them himself and be moved afresh by the act of communicating the touch to others. Thus not only are two different studies confused, but the less important receives the more attention. No doubt the connection between language and thought is a very intimate one, but we are strongly of opinion that in dealing with literature the voyage of the mind should be broken as little as possible by the examination of obstacles and the analysis of the element on which the explorer is floating. This last is a purely scientific study and can be to a great extent separated from the study of the literary art, as the chemical analysis of water can be separated from the observation of the sounds and colours conveyed by it. It would be a grave misfortune if a defect of method which has proved so injurious in the case of Latin and Greek were to appear also in the teaching of English literature. We believe, therefore, that formal grammar and philology should be recognised as scientific studies. and kept apart (so far as that is possible) from the lessons in which English is treated as an art, a means of creative expression, a record of human experience.

8. We have now set apart the preliminary training of the child in the language which is to be his means of

communication for all the common purposes of life, and the scientific study of language, which has a value of its own and should hold a high place among the other sciences. It remains for us to consider the actual and the possible position of English in the highest sense, that is as the channel of formative culture for all English people, and the medium of the creative art by which all English writers of distinction, whether poets, historians, philosophers or men of science, have secured for us the power of realising some part of their own experience of life. Education of the kind here implied has, for some time past, been one of the objects held in view by the Board of Education; and we have found with pleasure that there are now a number of elementary schools in which a considerable degree of success is being obtained on these lines. We must repeat, however, that in this region, as in others, there is not at present in existence any national plan. It is not the absence of a universal curriculum, an educational drill or uniform, that we are here regretting; it is the lack of a general appreciation of the true value of education and the best means of obtaining it. Even in secondary schools we find this lack of understanding evident, and it is widely spread among parents of all classes. The idea of a liberal education is either altogether ignored or struggles feebly for the right of existence; and even where it still lives, there is a singular depreciation of the value of English literature for such a purpose. By the tradition of the public schools the Latin and Greek classics are far more highly estimated. This tradition, however, dates from a time very different in many ways from our own, a time when Latin was the common language of the educated and official world, and Greek the main source of history, philosophy and natural science; when, moreover, the literatures of Greece and Rome were beyond all comparison the greatest available for study. The modern world has a much wider outlook and more numerous and more direct roads by which to explore life, whether on the

material or the spiritual side. In one respect Classics do retain their importance for the world. A knowledge of Latin civilisation is still indispensable for the full understanding of the languages, law and society of a great part of Europe, including the British Isles: and Greek literature is still the most life-giving and abundant source to which we trace our highest poetical and philosophical ideas and our feeling for artistic form. The Classics then remain, and will always remain, among the best of our inherited possessions, and for all truly civilised people they will always be not only a possession but a vital and enduring influence. Nevertheless, it is now, and will probably be for as long a time as we can foresee, impossible to make use of the Classics as a fundamental part of a national system of education. They are a great watershed of humanistic culture, but one to which the general mass of any modern nation can, at present, have no direct access. We are driven, then, in our search for the experience to be found in great art, to inquire whether there is available any similar and sufficient channel of supply which is within the reach of all without distinction. We feel that, for an Englishman, to ask this question is at the same time to answer it. To every child in this country, there is one language with which he must necessarily be familiar and by that, and by that alone, he has the power of drawing directly from one of the great literatures of the world. Moreover, if we explore the course of English literature, if we consider from what sources its stream has sprung, by what tributaries it has been fed, and with how rich and full a current it has come down to us, we shall see that it has other advantages not to be found elsewhere. There are mingled in it, as only in the greatest of rivers there could be mingled, the fertilising influences flowing down from many countries and from many ages of history. Yet all these have been subdued to form a stream native to our own soil. The flood of diverse human experience which it brings down to our own life and time is in no sense or degree foreign

to us, but has become the native experience of men of our own race and culture.

9. We have now come to the point where the evidence forces our lines of thought to converge. On the one hand, our national education needs to be perfected by being scientifically refounded as a universal, reasonable and liberal process of development; on the other hand, we find coincidentally that for this purpose, of all the means available, there is only one which fulfils all the conditions of our problem. Education is complete in proportion as it includes within its scope a measure of knowledge in the principal sciences and a measure of skill in literature, the drama, music, song and the plastic arts; but not all of these are equally useful for the training of the young. We recognise fully, on the one side, the moral, practical, educational value of natural science, on the other side the moral, practical, educational value of the arts and of all great literatures ancient or modern. But what we are looking for now is not merely a means of education, one chamber in the structure which we are hoping to rebuild, but the true starting-point and foundation from which all the rest must spring. For this special purpose there is but one material. We make no comparison, we state what appears to us to be an incontrovertible primary fact, that for English children no form of knowledge can take precedence of a knowledge of English, no form of literature can take precedence of English literature: and that the two are so inextricably connected as to form the only basis possible for a national education.

10. It will be clearly seen that by this statement we have declared the necessity of what must be, in however elementary a form, a liberal education for all English children whatever their position or occupation in life. We are glad to record not only our own strong conviction that such a scheme is, from every point of view, just, reasonable and for the national advantage, but also the fact that in the mass of opinions submitted to us we

nowhere find any evidence to the contrary. The judgments and experience laid before us by those who have a large experience and every right to express a judgment, support us in our belief that an education of this kind is the greatest benefit which could be conferred upon any citizen of a great state, and that the common right to it, the common discipline and enjoyment of it, the common possession of the tastes and associations connected with it, would form a new element of national unity, linking together the mental life of all classes by experiences which have hitherto been the privilege of a limited section. From the same evidence and opinions, we have derived the further belief that to initiate all English children into such a fellowship, to set the feet of all upon that road of endless and unlimited advance, is an undertaking in no way impossible or visionary. The difficulties are undoubtedly great, the means available are at present very inadequate, but the difficulties and the inadequacy are largely those which are already troubling us, and would hamper any conceivable scheme of education at the present moment. On the other hand, we have the advantages given us by the necessity of a new departure among rapidly changing conditions, and by the opportunity of avoiding some causes of past failure.

11. We have already spoken of some of these causes of past failure, but there is one of them upon which we must lay stress again. We believe that in English literature we have a means of education not less valuable than the Classics and decidedly more suited to the necessities of a general or national education, but we see also that in the future, as in the past, success or failure will depend upon our perception of the true purpose of the instrument and the right method of handling it. If we use English literature as a means of contact with great minds, a channel by which to draw upon their experience with profit and delight, and a bond of sympathy between the members of a human society, we shall succeed, as the best teachers of the Classics have often succeeded in

their more limited field. If, on the contrary, we cannot obtain a competent body of teachers, if we have to commit the guidance of youth to teachers who, in default of the necessary insight and enthusiasm, will fall back upon conventional appreciations, historical details and the minute examination of words and phrases, we shall repeat the failure of the past upon a wider and more ruinous scale. For a clear view of what we must avoid we may cite the evidence of a very eminent witness. Wordsworth's criticism of the method of dealing with the Classics prevalent in his own time, and still a danger in our own, is set out in a long and remarkable passage in *The Prelude*.* It may be summarised as follows :—

He thought that the Classics, as taught in his time, were worthless for education : that books in general came under the same condemnation, because they did not record or foster true feelings or knowledge of human nature : that human nature could be best studied in the largest and least sophisticated masses of men : that the lessons to be learned from it could best be gathered in and delivered to the young by poets and romancers : that the poet especially has this gift because he can create by the power of words, a "great Nature," a new world in which things are presented as objects recognised, but in flashes and with a significance or glory not otherwise seen to be their own. Lastly, it is noteworthy that the poets whom he had in mind were not ancient poets but modern ones; even, it would appear, poets of the same age and country as those whom they are to teach.

It will be seen that this is not in reality a destructive, but a constructive criticism. Wordsworth is not bent on differentiating between one literature and another. He is differentiating between two different methods of using literature in education, the practical and the pedantic, the real and the unreal. He advocates the transmission, not of book learning, but of the influence of personality and the experience of human life. The distinction here made between

* Book XIII, lines 160–179, 206–220, 232–249; and *see* Book V, lines 492–534, 594–607.

book learning and true education is of the first importance. Books are not things in themselves, they are merely the instruments through which we hear the voices of those who have known life better than ourselves. Wordsworth had perceived what has since been repeatedly demonstrated by great men of science, that the common, unaided senses of man are not equal to the realisation of the world. Just as the physicist or the mathematician show us deeper aspects of matter or of space, which in the life of every day we should never have discovered for ourselves, so poets, philosophers, and historians have the power of revealing new values, relations of thought, feeling, and act, by which the dull and superficial sight of the multitude is illuminated and helped to penetrate in the direction of reality. It is here that Wordsworth and the literature he loves are on the side of life against book learning. The antithesis has been more recently expressed in its simplest and most extreme form by Mr. P. B. Clayton, Chaplain at Poperinghe during the late war. He is speaking with very sympathetic appreciation of the ordinary soldiers in the line. "The only trouble is that their standard of general education is so low. Put the product of the old elementary schools side by side with the man from overseas, and his mental equipment is pitiful . . . The overseas man, with his freedom from tradition, his wide outlook on life, his intolerance of vested interests and his contempt for distinction based on birth rather than on worth, has stirred in the minds of many a comparison between the son of the bondwoman and the son of the free." Some of the values here may be disputable, but the round sums will be accepted. Among the best things which education can give are certainly freedom and independence of thought, a wide outlook on life, and a strong sense of the difference between convention and reality. A less trammelled life has given these in some degree to our men overseas. Literature, which is still more untrammelled, as well as wider and more penetrating, will give them to the children of this country in a still greater degree and from an earlier age. But if it is to do this the teacher must keep it close

to life : in no case must the real or practical bearing of the experience be neglected or avoided. And, as Wordsworth saw, though all great literatures will present deep and universal truths, in education that will be the more intelligible and powerful which presents the student with experience of time and circumstances more nearly related to his own.

12. In citing this opinion, which we accept and put forward with entire conviction, we are aware that we are opposing ourselves to those for whom the idea of a liberal education is inseparable from a knowledge of the Classics, and we desire to clear the ground of possible misunderstandings. In the course of our inquiry we have not found either among ourselves or the witnesses whom we have heard, any trace of hostility to the Classics. We recognise that for some minds the study of man's life and thought in a setting so far removed from modern conditions as was the ancient world may have special advantages. We recognise, also, that since many of our great writers have been influenced directly or indirectly by classical studies, the reader who approaches them with the same equipment will, in some ways, find it easier to understand them intimately and without loss of time. Further, we do not despair of the Classics or regard them as having no future in this country. We see in them sources, which can never be forgotten, of our own language, our own art, our own experience, and we hold that no student of English will have completed his exploration, or gained all its advantages, until he has ascended the stream of literature and discovered these perennial sources for himself. Nevertheless, we are convinced, both by necessity and by reason, that we must look elsewhere for our present purpose. The time is past for holding, as the Renaissance teachers held, that the Classics alone can furnish a liberal education. We do not believe that those who have not studied the Classics or any foreign literature must necessarily fail to win from their native English a full measure of culture and humane training. To hold such an opinion seems to us to involve an obstinate belittling of our national inheritance.

13. In any case, and whatever studies may be added to it, English, we are convinced, must form the essential basis of a liberal education for all English people, and in the earlier stages of education it should be the principal function of all schools of whatever type to provide this basis.

Of this provision the component parts will be, first, systematic training in the sounded speech of standard English, to secure correct pronunciation and clear articulation: second, systematic training in the use of standard English, to secure clearness and correctness both in oral expression and in writing: third, training in reading. Under this last head will be included reading aloud with feeling and expression, the use of books as sources of information and means of study, and finally, the use of literature as we have already described it, that is, as a possession and a source of delight, a personal intimacy and the gaining of personal experience, an end in itself and, at the same time, an equipment for the understanding of life.

14. Here, again, it may be well to deal at once with possible criticisms. It may be objected that while English is indeed a necessary condition of our education, it is one which may be taken for granted, like the air we breath or the land on which we live. We do not need, it may be said, to be taught English; to write and read, in Dogberry's opinion, comes by nature. This view is, perhaps, not likely to be now so crudely stated, but it has long been acted upon by many who are engaged in education, and is acquiesced in by many who control it. We must, therefore, state clearly that in our judgment it is an entirely unpractical view. It is repudiated not merely by literary experts but by the numerous practical men of business whom we have consulted. It is an instance of that divorce of education from reality which we have already found to be a main cause of failure in the past. English may come by nature up to a certain point; but that point is soon reached, and thenceforward the possibility of mental development, in whatever direction, is seriously diminished for those who have not

achieved some mastery of their mother tongue. What a man cannot clearly state he does not perfectly know, and, conversely, the inability to put his thought into words sets a boundary to his thought. Impressions may anticipate words, but unless expression seizes and recreates them they soon fade away, or remain but vague and indefinite to the mind which received them, and incommunicable to others. "A haziness of intellectual vision," said Cardinal Newman, "is the malady of all classes of men by nature . . . of all who have not had a really good education." It is a common experience that to find fit language for our impressions not only renders them clear and definite to ourselves and to others, but in the process leads to deeper insight and fresh discoveries, at once explaining and extending our knowledge. English is not merely the medium of our thought, it is the very stuff and process of it. It is itself the English mind, the element in which we live and work. In its full sense it connotes not merely acquaintance with a certain number of terms, or the power of spelling these terms correctly and arranging them without gross mistakes. It connotes the discovery of the world by the first and most direct way open to us, and the discovery of ourselves in our native environment. And as our discoveries become successively wider, deeper, and subtler, so should our control of the instrument which shapes our thought become more complete and exquisite, up to the limit of artistic skill. For the writing of English is essentially an art, and the effect of English literature in education is the effect of an art upon the development of human character.

Here again we desire to guard against any possible misunderstanding. We find that the nature of art and its relation to human life and welfare is not sufficiently understood or appreciated in this country. The prevalence of a low view of art, and especially of the art of literature, has been a main cause of our defective conception of national education. Hitherto literature has, even more than science, suffered in the public mind both misunderstanding and

degradation. Science has too often been regarded as a kind of skilled labour, a mere handling of materials for profit. Literature has first been confused with the science of language, and then valued for its commercial uses, from the writing of business letters up to the production of saleable books. The word art has been reserved for the more highly coloured or the less seriously valued examples of the latter. We must repeat that a much higher view may be taken of both science and art, and that this higher view is the only one consistent with a true theory of education. Commercial enterprise may have a legitimate and desirable object in view, but that object cannot claim to be the satisfaction of any of the three great natural affections of the human spirit —the love of truth, the love of beauty, and the love of righteousness. Man loves all these by nature and for their own sake only. Taken altogether, they are, in the highest sense, his life, and no system of education can claim to be adequate if it does not help him to develop these natural and disinterested loves. But if it is to do this effectively we must discard or unlearn all mean views of art, and especially of the art of literature. We must treat literature, not as language merely, not as an ingenious set of symbols, a superficial and superfluous kind of decoration, or a graceful set of traditional gestures, but as the self-expression of great natures, the record and rekindling of spiritual experiences, and in daily life for every one of us the means by which we may, if we will, realise our own impressions and communicate them to our fellows. We reiterate, then, the two points which we desire to build upon; first, the fundamental necessity of English for the full development of the mind and character of English children, and second, the fundamental truth that the use of English does not come to all by nature, but is a fine art, and must be taught as a fine art.

15. We believe that such an education based upon the English language and literature would have important social, as well as personal, results; it would have a unifying tendency. Two causes, both accidental and

conventional rather than national, at present distinguish and divide one class from another in England. The first of these is a marked difference in their modes of speech. If the teaching of the language were properly and universally provided for, the difference between educated and uneducated speech,* which at present causes so much prejudice and difficulty of intercourse on both sides, would gradually disappear. Good speech and great literature would not be regarded as too fine for use by the majority, nor, on the other hand, would natural gifts for self-expression be rendered ineffective by embarrassing faults of diction or composition. The second cause of division amongst us is the undue narrowness of the ground on which we meet for the true purposes of social life. The associations of sport and games are widely shared by all classes in England, but with mental pleasures and mental exercises the case is very different. The old education was not similar for all, but diverse. It went far to make of us not one nation, but two, neither of which shared the associations or tastes of the other. An education fundamentally English would, we believe, at any rate bridge, if not close, this chasm of separation. The English people might learn as a whole to regard their own language, first with respect, and then with a genuine feeling of pride and affection. More than any mere symbol it is actually a part of England: to maltreat it or deliberately to debase it would be seen to be an outrage; to become sensible of its significance and splendour would be to step upon a higher level. In France, we are told, this pride in the national language is strong and universal; the French artisan will often use his right to object that an expression "is not French." Such a feeling for our own native language would be a bond of union between classes, and would beget the right kind of national pride. Even more certainly should pride and joy in the national literature serve as such a bond. This feeling, if fostered in all our schools without

* This does not refer to dialect, for which *see* §§ 69, 144.

exception, would disclose itself far more often and furnish a common meeting ground for great numbers of men and women who might otherwise never come into touch with one another. We know from the evidence of those who are familiar with schools of every type that the love of fine style and the appreciation of what is great in human thought and feeling is already no monopoly of a single class in England, that it is a natural and not an exceptional gift, and that though easily discouraged by unfavourable circumstances it can also, by sympathetic treatment, be easily drawn out and developed. Within the school itself all scholars, though specialising perhaps on different lines, will be able to find a common interest in the literature class and the debating or dramatic society. And this common interest will be likely to persist when other less vital things have been abandoned. The purely technical or æsthetic appeal of any art will, perhaps, always be limited to a smaller number but, as experience of life, literature will influence all who are capable of finding recreation in something beyond mere sensation. These it will unite by a common interest in life at its best, and by the perpetual reminder that through all social differences human nature and its strongest affections are fundamentally the same.

16. Our inquiry cannot end here. When we have decided upon the nature and method of the education to be recommended we have still to consider as a necessary corollary the provision of an adequate teaching staff. This is a matter of great moment, for whatever kind of education is recommended, its success or failure will depend chiefly upon the intelligence and sympathy with which it is conducted. This will be even more true of an education in English than of any other; for two reasons. In the first place the teaching of English as the instrument of thought and the means of communication will necessarily affect the teaching of every other subject. Whatever view is taken of specialisation in schools, it is evidently desirable that the general education of every

teacher shall be sufficiently good to ensure unceasing instruction in the English language. The teachers of all special subjects must be responsible for the quality of the English spoken or written during their lessons. In every department of school work confused and slovenly English must be regarded as the result of a failure on the part of the teacher. Secondly, since the literature lesson is no mechanical matter and is to consist not in the imparting of information but in the introduction of the student to great minds and new forms of experience, it is evidently necessary that the teacher should himself be already in touch with such minds and such experience. In other words, he must himself have received an education of the kind towards which he is to lead his class. It is no doubt true, as the Board of Education have pointed out in a circular on the teaching of English,* that the real teachers of Literature are the great writers themselves —the greater the work the more clearly it speaks for itself; but this only leads to the conclusion that for teachers we must have those who will not come between their pupils and the author they are reading, but will stand by them sympathetically, directing or moderating the impact of the new experience upon their minds.

17. We desire to express our strong conviction that for the purposes of such an education as we have outlined no teacher can, in his own grade, be too highly gifted or too highly trained, and that this is at least as true in the earlier as in the later stages. It is sometimes assumed that a first-rate teacher is wasted in an elementary school. This is, in our judgment, a complete misunderstanding. If any stage in education is to be considered more important than another, it must be that early stage in which the child at an elementary or preparatory school is first introduced to the great influences which are to invigorate and direct his mental life. For these schools, no teaching can be too good, and we have to consider, in the very first place, what means are available for the provision of

* The Teaching of English in Secondary Schools, 1910, § 21.

a competent staff. Our difficulty would be infinitely lessened if the general population of this country had already for years past been receiving such an education as we now advocate, but in the natural order of things, this could never be; the teacher must exist before the pupil. He is our lever, and we must first apply our whole force to him if we are to raise the mass This has not been sufficiently recognised hitherto. Teachers have not only been inadequately paid, but care has not been taken to see that they are sufficiently supplied with the libraries and other intellectual opportunities which alone can keep them in the mental health and strength necessary for their task. A still more serious defect has been the inadequacy of their training. They have neither been grounded nor confirmed in the idea of a liberal education. They are a class for whom a university course is most desirable and yet, for the greater number, such a course is still beyond reach. In our judgment, it is a vital necessity for the nation that in its universities adequate room should always be available for those who are to be engaged in the work of education. In the meantime, until the changes necessary for this purpose can be effected, we believe that something might be done to help the existing staff of teachers by voluntary effort on the part of men and women who have themselves received a university education and have time to spare for lecturing in schools or training colleges. The enrolment of a fraternity of itinerant preachers on English Literature—a panel of men and women who are recognised authorities on their own subjects and are willing to lecture upon them occasionally—would be a step in accord with other movements of the time and with our national tradition of unpaid public service. It would not only reinforce the regular army of teachers but would have an important social effect by counteracting the influences which tend to bitterness and disintegration. Many of the differences between the lot of one class and another are of little importance: but the present advantage of rich over poor in our schools—the difficulty of the attempt to pass up the

intellectual ladder and to attain the spiritual freedom conferred by a real education—is keenly and rightly felt as an unnecessary and unjust inequality. Nothing would, in our belief, conduce more to the unity and harmony of the nation than a public policy directed to the provision of equal intellectual opportunities for all, and service to this end would be doubly effective if it came voluntarily as from those who have already received their inheritance, and desire to share with the rest of their countrymen that in which their life and freedom most truly consist.

CHAPTER II.

HISTORICAL RETROSPECT.

18. The " Position of English in the educational system of England " has scarcely any history. Of conscious and direct teaching of English the past affords little sign. Up to recent years our schools have failed to perceive either their need of English or their responsibilities towards English. Even now, the burden of proof still lies, strangely enough, on those who demand for it a basic place in our scheme of education. Some reference to Educational History may help to account for this.

19. It has been of lasting disadvantage to the position of English that when our educational system began to grow up English was perforce omitted. It was then a thing of no account. To the early schools, to the early colleges at Oxford and Cambridge, it was but a dialect or dialects spoken by the common people. French was the language used by all who aspired to importance. It was not until 1362 that English became the language of the Courts of Law, and of Parliament. The *Polychronicon* of Ranulf Higden (d. 1364), as translated into English by John of Trevisa, states that " school-children, contrary to the usage of other nations, are compelled to leave their own tongue and to construe their lessons and things in French, and have done so since the Normans came first into England." " But," adds Trevisa himself, " now, the year of our Lord 1385, the ninth year of Richard II., in all the grammar schools of England children leave French and construe and learn in English." * Before this was written, Wykeham had founded his school at Winchester and his college at Oxford. Education in England was thus well advanced before the schools even recognised English as the vernacular.

* Adamson : *History of Education*, p. 67.

20. But by the end of the fourteenth century the English language had definitely asserted itself against the results of the Norman Conquest and later French influences. It was no longer merely a number of local dialects. Standard English had emerged. The East Midland dialect had now become " the King's English." It was the language spoken at the Court, and in Oxford and Cambridge. Through the works of Chaucer it became the literary language of the country. Yet, though English was now indisputably the language of England, and was taking a standardised form, it does not appear to have received in the schools more than mere recognition of its existence. It was overshadowed by the practical importance of Latin. Latin was the international language. It was the language of the theologian and the diplomatist, of learning and of science. For all who had occasion to travel or to do business abroad, for professional men such as the lawyer or physician, Latin was indispensable. Many schoolmasters had a better command of Latin than of English. John Palsgrave, writing in 1540, points out that often they had little opportunity of hearing the purest English, and so " they be not able to express their conceit in their vulgar tongue, nor be sufficient perfectly to open the diversities of phrases between our tongue and the Latin which," he adds " in my poor judgment is the very chief thing that the schoolmaster should travail in." * This indeed appears to have been true at a much later date. Locke, near the close of the seventeenth century, asks ironically, " Would it not be very unreasonable to require of a learned country schoolmaster to teach his scholar to express himself handsomely in English when it appears to be so little his business or thought that the boy's mother . . . . outdoes him in it?"

21. Latin then was the language almost exclusively studied in the mediæval schools. But though it was fluently spoken it was Latin of a barbarous kind. It was a technical subject. Its study was not humanistic but utilitarian. Classical literature was little read. There was scarcely any

* Foster Watson: *The Old Grammar Schools*, p. 10.

interest in its content or its form. The mediæval system of school education allowed little freedom to the intellect, but rested on a basis of authoritatively fixed ideas. The civilisation and thought of the ancients, the richness and variety of their life, and the expression of these in classical literature lay entirely outside the scope of such a system.

22. A revolution in educational ideas took place when in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the influence of the Italian Humanists reached the north of Europe. The mediæval conception of life collapsed before the Renaissance ideal of a liberal education for all who were fitted to receive it. To the Humanists a liberal education implied the freeing of the human reason and the development of the full powers of both body and mind. It was concerned with all the pursuits and activities proper to man; hence the term "Humanities." It aimed at producing the good citizen, possessed of sound judgment in practical affairs, and at the same time it strongly emphasised the æsthetic, which the mediæval system had ignored. Education, we have said, proceeds by teaching the student to follow the different lines on which life may be explored and proficiency in living may be obtained. Nothing less than this was the educational aim of the Humanists.

23. But for our purpose, the significant point is this. What the Humanists looked to as the essential means whereby their ideals might be realised was literature, or "good letters." "The essence of humanism," says John Addington Symonds,* "consisted in a new and vital perception of the dignity of man as a rational being, and in the further perception that classic literature alone displayed human nature in the plenitude of intellectual and moral freedom." The principle is not affected by the fact that it was classical literature to which they turned and by which they were inspired. No other stone was yet available as the keystone of their arch. During the century which followed the death of Chaucer in 1400 English Literature had developed but little, and at the time of the Renaissance

* *The Renaissance in Italy (Revival of Learning).*

it could scarcely put forward a claim to be included in, still less to hold any place of honour in, the system of education. But the Renaissance educators did clearly perceive, what was all too soon lost sight of, that the essence of a liberal education is the study of a great literature. They found in the Classics the source of all culture and enlightenment; the best that had been thought in the world expressed in the best possible way. They emphasised style in contrast to the barbarous language of the mediæval schools, but they valued it not for itself alone, but because without beauty of expression they held truth of thought to be unattainable. And the spirit in which they approached the literature which to them was all in all was the spirit which we desire to recapture on behalf of English to-day.

24. Dean Colet (who endowed St. Paul's School in 1509), Wolsey and Archbishop Cranmer were characteristic examples of this spirit. But the first written statement in English of the humanistic position is *The Governour*, by Sir Thomas Elyot, printed in 1530. He dwells with fervour on "the sweet and pleasant reading of old authors." Homer is to him "that noble Homer from whom as from a fountain proceeded all eloquence and learning." Or again "This noble Virgil giveth to a child, if he will take it, everything apt for his wit and capacity." "Lord God, what incomparable sweetness of words and matter shall he find in the said works of Plato and Cicero; wherein is joined gravity with delectation, excellent wisdom with divine eloquence, absolute virtue with pleasure incredible." Roger Ascham, whose *Scholemaster* was published after his death in 1568, writes in a similar strain. "We find always," he says, "wisdom and eloquence, good matter and good utterance, never, or seldom, asunder." "Ye know not what hurt ye do to learning that care not for words, but for matter, and so make a divorce between the tongue and the heart." But his references to the Classics constantly show the great store he sets by their actual substance. "For such as have not wit of themselves, but must learn of others to judge right of men's doings, let

them read that wise poet Horace, in his Arte Poetica." "The life of the wisest traveller that ever travelled thither (to Italy), set out by the wisest writer that ever spoke with tongue, God's doctrine only excepted; and that is Ulysses in Homer." "Plato also, that divine philosopher, hath many Godly medicines against the poison of vain pleasure." No remoteness from life can be charged against his attitude to Literature. "Learning," he says, "teacheth more in one year than experience in twenty; and learning teacheth safely when experience maketh more miserable than wise."

25. It may be objected that the aspirations of the Humanists have proved but a noble illusion, that few are found to-day to champion the system which they sought to establish, and that so far as Literature has been tried as the basis of education it has proved a failure. We reply that the Renaissance principle of Language and Literature as the basis of education never failed and could not fail. But for the Humanists this principle was capable only of limited and imperfect application, and their system was in consequence only in part successful.

First there was the language difficulty. Before the Latin and Greek Literatures could be read the languages had to be learnt. The Humanists were not daunted, but they perceived that there was no time to be lost. If the study of the classical languages was begun sufficiently early, if it was pursued with unflinching ardour, under skilful teachers, and to the exclusion of all other studies, the difficulty, they believed, could be overcome.

A child might, as Elyot advises, begin Greek at seven and "in the meantime use the Latin tongue as a familiar language." He could study literature betimes: for the reading of poets, says Elyot, Aristophanes, Homer, Virgil, Ovid, Silvius, Lucan, and Hesiod, "will suffice until he pass the age of thirteen years." John Brinsley, in his *Ludus Literarius, or The Grammar School*, published in 1627, would have the child sent to the grammar school at five years of age instead of at about seven if he is to become by the time he is fifteen, "a good grammarian, ready for the

University." He might work almost all day; the usual working hours in the grammar schools, in summer at least, were from 6 till 11 in the morning and from 1 till 6 in the afternoon.* His holidays need not be long; at St. Paul's Colet ordained that* "the children shall have no remedies."† By such means wonderful results could no doubt be achieved. Early in the nineteenth century John Stuart Mill learnt the Greek alphabet at the age of three and had read a great many Greek books by the time he was eight, nor did he consider that there was anything exceptional about his performance. John Evelyn's little son failed to survive his still more remarkable precocity.

26. But the carrying out of such a system demanded a race of supermen, both as teachers and pupils. The initial linguistic difficulties interposed too hard a barrier, and offered too tempting opportunities to lovers of routine. As the early impulse of enthusiasm died away, the term "Humanities" was narrowed down to mean simply the ancient languages. The humanist educators had discountenanced concentration on formal grammar. "Grammar," says Elyot, "being but an introduction to the understanding of authors, if it be made too long or exquisite to the learner, it in a manner mortifieth his courage." "To read the grammar alone by itself," says Ascham, "is tedious for the master, hard for the scholar, cold and uncomfortable for them both." But grammar and mere verbalism soon reasserted themselves. Style was too exclusively cultivated and in the Ciceronian imitation which became fashionable the connection between style and thought was lost sight of. For the ordinary pupil, any study of the content of the Classics or of their bearing on life practically disappeared. From the time when he entered the grammar school his education was little more than a formal and laborious linguistic drill.

27. Moreover, as time went on, Humanism itself gradually tended to undo the humanistic scheme of educa-

* Foster Watson: *The Old Grammar Schools*, pp. 119 and 120.
† *i.e.*, holidays.

tion. The work which the Renaissance so effectively did, the generating of the whole of modern culture, created an alternative means whereby the ideals of the Humanists might be realised. In his *Toxophilus*, published in 1545, Ascham apologises for writing in English, when "to have written in another tongue had been both more profitable for my study and also more honest for my name," for "in the English tongue everything is done in a manner so meanly, both for the matter and handling, that no man can do worse." Before the end of the century this had, of course, entirely ceased to be true. And had the generous ideals of the Renaissance educators remained fresh, some contact might well have been established between the superb literary fruit of the Renaissance in England and the school curriculum. Through English the humanist scheme might have been not superseded but widely extended, and the humanist principle have so come full into play. But in the schools, the means, as so often happens, became the end. They suffered no developments in the world outside to affect their narrowed and stereotyped system.

28. Vives, in his *de Tradendis Disciplinis* (1523), makes a far-sighted reference to the vernacular. "Let the teacher know with exactitude the vernacular language of the boys . . . . unless he speaks in the language of his country he will mislead the boys." * That he often lacked this knowledge our quotation from Palsgrave has shown (§ 20).

Thoughtful and open-minded teachers perceived in due course the arbitrariness and remoteness from life of the education of their day, and the unreasonableness of the neglect of English. Mulcaster, Headmaster of the Merchant Taylors' School from 1561 to 1586, and of St. Paul's from 1586 to 1608, urges, in 1581, that the use of the vernacular in the liturgy of Protestantism calls for the study of English. "Now that we are returned home to our English A B C, as most natural to our soil and most proper to our faith, we are to be directed by nature and property [*i.e.*, suitability]

* Foster Watson: *Beginnings of the Teaching of Modern Subjects in England.*

to read that first which we speak first." * In a treatise published in 1582 on the right writing of the English tongue, he says : " I love Rome, but London better; I favour Italy, but England more; I honour the Latin, but I worship the English." . Further on he sums up, " *Necessity* itself doth call for *English*." †

29 We have already referred to John Brinsley's *Ludus Literarius*. Brinsley was no revolutionary; he takes for granted the curriculum of his time. But he has abundant common sense, and he throws many sidelights on the discontent of parents and others, and the practice of the general run of teachers. The book is in dialogue form. Spoudeus, who speaks for country grammar schools in general, complains to Philoponus (*i.e.*, Brinsley), " I have sometimes been so abashed and ashamed, that I have not known what to say, when, some being a little discontented, or taking occasion to quarrel about paying my stipend, have cast this in my teeth, that their children have been under me six or seven years and yet have not learned to read English well. I myself have also known that their complaints have been true in part; though I have taken all the pains with them that ever I could devise. But," he continues, " the trouble is this : that when as my children do first enter into Latin, many of them will forget to read English, and some of them be worse two or three years after that they have been in construction, than when they began it. . . . Some of their parents, who use me the kindliest, will be at me, that their children may every day read some chapters of the Bible, to help their reading of English. Now this I cannot possibly do, but they must needs be hindered in their Latin, in some lessons or necessary exercises." Philoponus, in reply, admits " there seems unto me to be a very main want in all our Grammar Schools generally, or in the most of them; whereof I have heard some great learned men to complain; That there is no care had in respect to train up scholars so as they may be able to

* Foster Watson : *The Old Grammar Schools*, p. 95.
† Quick : *Educational Reformers*, Appendix, p. 302.

express their minds purely and readily in our own tongue and to increase in the practice of it as well as in the Latin or Greek; whereas our chief endeavour should be for it."

30. This passage is of special interest as showing some of the parents both petitioning for the teaching of English, and making suggestions as to how it might be given. In a later chapter, "Of knowledge of the grounds of Religion and training up the scholars therein," Brinsley deals with the study of the Catechism, the Sermon, and the Bible. "No day should be suffered to pass over wherein there should not be some short exercise or lesson of religion." If he has any secondary object in view, this appears, indeed, to be Latin rather than English. "If I could thus teach them Religion and Latin all under one," says Spoudeus, "it were a most happy thing," and Brinsley replies, "I will show you how you may do it." But, indirectly, the influence of Puritanism, especially during the period 1559–1660, played a great part in the teaching of English. Many school statutes required the study or the public reading of the Bible.* The intensive study of the Bible in the homes, and the memorising of large portions of it, produced a great effect in familiarising the people with noble English. Professor Foster Watson, in a memorandum which he kindly sent us, states, "John Bunyan and his *Pilgrim's Progress* is the sign and token of an education in the vernacular without the aid of the conscious concentration on the Classics," and this education, he adds, was effected "by school and home study of the English Bible, which, in the sense of appreciation of good English, is possibly not always surpassed in schools of to-day."

31. Milton, in his *Tractate on Education*, first published in 1644, reasserts the early humanist principle. "Language," he says, "is but the instrument conveying to us things useful to be known." Latin and Greek must first be learnt, and then the "things useful to be known" must be studied

* *See* Foster Watson: *The English Grammar Schools to* 1660 p. 58.

in Latin and Greek authors. Milton has hard words for the school teaching of his day, "those Grammatick flats and shallows," and he makes short work of the language difficulty. "We do amiss," he says, "to spend seven or eight years merely in scraping together so much miserable Latin and Greek as might be learnt otherwise easily and delightfully in one year." A hard saying this for Spoudeus and his like; and still more sweeping is Milton's list of "things useful to be known." But Milton perceives and owns that his way of education "is not a Bow for every man to shoot in that counts himself a teacher, but will require sinews almost equal to those which Homer gave Ulysses."

32. The nature of "those Grammatick flats and shallows" into which the teaching of language had so largely fallen is indicated by Charles Hoole, who wrote his *Art of Teaching School* for the benefit of Rotherham School and published it 23 years later, in 1660. "The general course taken in teaching the rules of the genders and nouns and conjugating verbs is, to make children patter them over by heart, and sometimes also to construe and parse them; but seldom or never are they taught the meaning of a rule, or how to make it apply readily to the words they meet with elsewhere." But he has no misgivings about the established curriculum and the schoolmaster's responsibilities in the matter of English he dismisses lightly enough. "For learning to read English perfectly," he says, "I allow two or three years' time, so that at seven or eight years of age a child may begin Latin."

33. Locke, in *Some thoughts concerning Education*, published in 1690, puts up a very strong and definite plea for the teaching of English. In place of "Themes, Declamations and Verses," in Latin, he calls for themes in English, and the reading of "those things that are well writ in English." "Since 'tis English," he says, "that an English Gentleman will have constant use of, that is the Language he should chiefly cultivate, and wherein most Care should be taken to polish and perfect his Style. . . . This I find universally neglected, and no Care taken anywhere to

improve young Men in their own Language, that they may thoroughly understand and be masters of it. If any one among us have a Facility or Purity more than ordinary in his Mother Tongue, it is owing to Chance, or his Genius, or anything, rather than to his Education or any Care of his Teacher. To mind what English his Pupil speaks or writes, is below the Dignity of one bred up amongst Greek and Latin, though he have but little of them himself. These are the learned Languages fit only for learned men to meddle with and teach. English is the language of illiterate Vulgar. Though yet we see the Polity of some of our Neighbours hath not thought it beneath the publick Care to promote and reward the Improvement of their own Language. Polishing and enriching their Tongue is no small Business amongst them; it hath Colleges and Stipends appointed it, and there is raised amongst them a great Ambition and Emulation of writing correctly." Locke can only suppose "that the Parents of Children still live in fear of the School-master's Rod," but "Custom serves for Reason." "Custom," he repeats, "has so ordained it, and who dares disobey?"

34. But by the end of the seventeenth century, the position of the established curriculum was gravely undermined. The practical importance of Latin was gone; it was no longer the obligatory language of Religion or of the Professions. Culture and knowledge were no longer enshrined in the classical languages alone. Dissatisfaction, as we have seen, was widespread. On the other hand, the formal linguistic study of the Classics was in actual possession in the schools, it had tradition behind it, and had perfected its technique as a system of instruction. English was a penal offence; the Grammar School statutes of the 16th and 17th centuries provided as a rule not only that the master should speak Latin to the scholars, but that the scholars should speak Latin to each other both within the school and without. "It is a usual custom in schools," says Brinsley, "to appoint *Custodes* or *Asini* to observe and catch them who speak English in each form, or whom they

see idle, to give them the Ferula, and to make them *Custodes* if they cannot answer a question which they ask." * At Eton, according to Sir H. C. Maxwell Lyte, the *custos* was practically the dunce, and one of the ways by which the opprobrious name could be acquired was by talking in English.†

35. Had the problem been simply how best, in the altered times, to interpret the humanist principle of Literature as the basis of education, English might soon, perhaps, have come into its own. But, at about this period, the humanist principle was largely displaced by a new one, which had no connection with humanism. It may be found in Locke's "Thoughts," where it serves to counterbalance the vehemence of his plea for reform. It was the idea that education was essentially a discipline. The process of learning, and not the thing learned, was what mattered. "The Studies," says Locke, "which he sets him upon are but, as it were, the Exercises of his Faculties and Employment of his Time . . . to teach him Application and accustom him to take Pains." By the study of certain subjects, it came to be held, the powers of the mind might be developed to a high pitch, and would then be available for all the purposes of life. The acceptance of this theory is in the main responsible for the continued domination of formal linguistic studies in the schools in the 18th and 19th centuries. However unsafe the humanistic basis which had hitherto supported them might have become, they could rest secure upon the new one that education was a training of separate faculties and a discipline, for which purposes it was claimed that the classical languages were an incomparable instrument. This theory, as we have already stated, is inconsistent with the view of education as the acquisition of experience of life and the development through that of the energies of the mind. But it still exerts much influence in favour of the premature study of the classics, and is used as a weapon against the

* *Ludus Literarius.*

† *History of Eton College*, pp. 139, 140.

teaching of English on the assumption that from the study of English no mental discipline can be obtained.

36. A further idea which helped to bolster up the traditional system was that a knowledge of the Classics conferred a certain social distinction. Latin, as we have shown, had once been a practical necessity for all holding positions of importance, and though it was now entirely a learned language, its traditional association with high place had won for it a glamour which had the more fascination as its origin in fact came to be lost sight of. Locke himself is fully under its influence. "I am not here speaking against Greek and Latin," he says, "I think they ought to be studied, and the Latin at least understood well by every Gentleman . . . . Latin I look upon as absolutely necessary to a Gentleman." But that tradesmen and farmers should send their children to grammar schools (and so obtain what social advantage a smattering of Latin could bestow) he finds "ridiculous." The interesting point is that it does not occur to him to attribute their action to any desire for the educational wellbeing of their children. The nature of the "liberal education" offered by the grammar schools precludes any such supposition. He can only explain it by "Custom," which "has so consecrated this method that it is almost religiously observed." But a sharp divorce between the education of the gentleman and the education of the "illiterate vulgar," for whom English was the suitable language, was a sad falling away from the ideal expressed, for instance, by Cranmer. "If the gentleman's son be apt to learning, let him be admitted; if not apt, let the poor man's child, that is apt, enter his room." *

37. But though the disciplinary conception of education lent much-needed support to the formal linguistic curriculum, the grammar schools languished during the 18th century. The altered basis on which their system rested could never create enthusiasm, and they were altogether out of touch with the life of their time. In the better schools, no doubt, the study of the Classics, especially by

* Foster Watson: *The Old Grammar Schools*, p. 20.

such methods as that which Ascham advocates of translating from Latin into English and then back again, served incidentally as an excellent means of teaching English, so much so that it came to be held, and is still held by some, that the writing of English can be learned in no other way than through the study of Latin. English grammar, too, was often prescribed for the younger pupils in the smaller schools. But this seems to have been as far as the recognition of English in the grammar schools went. Statutes in many cases stood in the way. Lord Eldon, in 1805, in the Leeds Grammar School case, decided that the Governors could not make provision for modern subjects.*

38. Before the end of the eighteenth century many middle class parents were sending their children to private schools known as Academies, which aimed at adapting their teaching more to the actual needs of the scholars, and laid considerable stress on modern studies, including English Grammar and Composition, and sometimes even the reading of English Literature. A book published early in the 19th century, entitled, "Systematic Education in the various Departments of Literature and Science," which seems to have achieved some success as a text-book in the Academies, devotes considerable attention to the "Belles Lettres." It is reasonable and proper, the authors hold, that the sons of the nobility and the principal gentry should "submit to the discipline" of public education. But they observe that any one who wishes his son to be instructed in "wholesome knowledge," free from the obligation of an almost exclusive attention to classical literature, may have his wishes amply gratified in the Academies and in the Scotch Universities, particularly those of Glasgow and Edinburgh.

The Academies were usually short-lived. A good many were gross impostures, but some were, no doubt, very efficient, and the popularity and success of these had a marked influence on educational developments in the 19th century. But the Grammar Schools fell, for the most part, into a sad state of disrepute and decay, and the Schools

* Adamson: *History of Education.*

Inquiry Commission, appointed to inquire into the condition of the Endowed Schools (other than the nine great ancient foundations) reported in 1867 to that effect. Their conclusions were based on evidence such as that of Mr. (afterwards Sir Joshua) Fitch, who, after speaking of the English language "as being seldom taught systematically and rarely regarded by the headmasters as a serious part of the school course," adds: "Three-fourths of the scholars whom I have examined in endowed schools, if tested by the usual standards appropriate to boys of similar age, under the revised code, [*i.e.*, in Elementary Schools] would fail to pass the examination either in arithmetic or in any other elementary subject."

39. At this point, we may turn to Popular Education, the development of which may be regarded as dating from the beginning of the 19th century The problem of the conditions of life of the working classes was then assuming altogether new proportions. Between 1750 and 1850, the population grew from about six and a half millions to eighteen millions. Towards meeting the immensely increased need for education, especially in the newly arisen industrial towns, the sparse supply of charity schools under the control of the Church could effect but little. But philanthropic and religious persons were moved to intervene. The efforts of the pioneers, Andrew Bell and Joseph Lancaster, led to the foundation of the National Society in 1811 and of the British and Foreign School Society in 1814. Fear of the danger to the State that an illiterate population might constitute became a powerful motive after the Reform Bill of 1832, and in 1833 the House of Commons made its first grant towards the cost of education. In 1839 the Committee of the Privy Council on Education was created, Sir James Kay-Shuttleworth becoming its first Secretary.

40. The early philanthropic founders of schools were inspired by only the most rudimentary educational ideas. They aimed merely at affording to as many as possible the ability to read, write, and cipher. Under the monitorial system of Bell and Lancaster, schools containing as many as

a thousand pupils might be taught at a cost of 5s. per head per annum by monitors who possessed the "advantage" (as Bell considered it*) of knowing nothing which was beyond their pupils' comprehension. Such teachers could teach the mechanical processes of reading, but could bring their pupils little mental enlightenment. However, it was soon perceived, especially by Sir James Kay-Shuttleworth, "the founder of English popular education," as Matthew Arnold calls him,† that the provision of competent teachers was absolutely necessary. He set himself to develop a pupil-teacher system, and, in 1840, he established the Battersea Training College, which gave a course of education, extending over two or more years, to students of at least 18 years of age. The provision of other training colleges followed.

41. On this point of the training of the teachers, popular education was brought up against the educational ideas which prevailed at the time in the Universities and the Public Schools. Had the education of the day rested on the basis on which we would place it, of clear thinking and clear self-expression in the mother tongue, had it retained its original humanistic impulse and its hold on reality, it would have been able to adapt itself at once to the needs of the new body of persons who turned to it for help, and through them it might have extended its scope till it reached the children of every class. But, as we have seen, it had come to be looked on as the privilege of a few—of the gentleman, of the higher, or governing, classes—and all that it could offer was a supposed disciplining of the faculties by means of formal, especially linguistic, studies, tempered, in view of the vocational requirements of the new type of pupil, by certain concessions to the "useful knowledge" theory characteristic of the Academies.

42. Kay-Shuttleworth himself saw clearly enough what the needs of the Elementary Schools were. "The Committee of Council," he wrote, "believed that even reading,

* Adamson: *History of Education.*
† *Report of Newcastle Commission.*

writing, and arithmetic would be more successfully taught in those schools in which the masters had the knowledge and skill required to make even these elements a part of a well-ordered method by which the whole of the child's faculties might be strengthened by their active exercise." Similar views were expressed by Mr. Moseley, Inspector of Training Colleges for Men, in his reports between 1848 and 1855. The Newcastle Commission, which was appointed in 1858 "to inquire into the present state of popular education," and which reported in 1861, sets forth these views, together with the difficulties which confronted them, and affords a clear picture of the chaos resulting from the absence of any broad general basis of education, such as English offers. What Mr. Moseley wanted was, according to the Report of the Newcastle Commission, that the training colleges should teach "what may be called the philosophy of the subjects taught in the elementary schools." "Reading, Arithmetic, English Grammar, English History, and Geography," he had said, "as usually . . . taught in our schools . . . are mere statements of facts suggestive of few or no conclusions, and barren of interest," but these subjects, he considered, might be studied in such a way as to exercise the highest powers of the mind. He also thought that the labouring classes ought to be educated "by teaching them to reason about and understand things connected with their ordinary pursuits."

These ideas do not, on the face of them, appear chimerical, and apparently they commended themselves to the Commissioners. But there was an insuperable difficulty. The educational institutions of the country did not produce persons capable of giving the instruction desired. "It was thus impossible," says the Report, "that Mr. Moseley's view should be carried out at once, or that anything more than a gradual approach to it should be made." Mr. Moseley himself seems to have put it forward only as a counsel of perfection. "The training schools," he wrote, "were compelled to use, as a means of the student's education, such subjects as there can be found teachers of. The

result we seek to obtain must be placed in subordination to the means, and thus, in one training school classical studies must continue to be employed, and in another, mathematical, for forming the minds of schoolmasters who will never have to give instruction either in classics or mathematics, according as the officers of these institutions may happen to have been educated in the one or the other University or to prefer the one or the other department of study."

43. Accordingly, in drawing up a Government syllabus for the purpose of testing the instruction given in the Training Colleges for Men, Mr. Moseley divided the subjects into two classes—" one intended to form the minds of the students, the other intended to give practical skill in the discharge of their duties as teachers." " The subjects relied upon for the general cultivation of the students' minds " (so the Report proceeds) were in the first year, Euclid and Algebra, " *or* instead, that part of the Latin grammar which relates to accidence, concords, genders of nouns, perfect tenses and supines of verbs." In the second year, one of five subjects could be chosen. The first three were Physical Science, Mechanics, or Mathematics; the other two were Latin (*i.e.* as much of Yonge's Eton Grammar as was not included in the first-year subjects, with a specified prose and poetical author) and English Literature. The last-named subject " includes the history of English Literature from Chaucer to Milton, with the addition of certain specified books, passages from which have to be paraphrased and analysed, whilst questions are set upon the style and subject matter. It is recommended that the books specified should be read through with the students in short portions, as exercises in language, in illustration of the grammar used in the training school, just as the Greek and Latin Classics are read in superior public schools."

Some English was also included in the second group of subjects, *i.e.* those forming the subject matter of instruction in elementary schools, and intended to increase directly the

students' professional skill. They were required to read aloud from Warren's *Select Extracts from Blackstone's Commentaries*, Sir. J. Herschel's *Discourse on Natural Philosophy*, or *The Spectator*. The Training Colleges were advised that the text-books should be read through in short portions, like the classics at public schools, and the students questioned in the same manner upon the portions so read with a view to examination in parsing, paraphrasing, and the principles of grammar. A book (*e.g. Julius Cæsar* or the first book of *Paradise Lost*) also had to be got up, and the students were required to paraphrase and analyse a passage from it and answer questions on the style and subject-matter.

The Syllabus for the Women's Colleges was limited to subjects taught in elementary schools. It contained, says the Newcastle Report, none of the subjects "intended for the general refinement of the students' minds." The reason for this is not given; presumably it is regarded as obvious. "English language, grammar, and literature," were required, and included "the classification and inflection of words, the analysis of simple sentences, syntactical parsing and paraphrases," the examples being taken from the fifth book of Cowper's *Task*, Goldsmith's *Traveller* and *Deserted Village*, the first book of *Paradise Lost*, or the first book of the *Excursion*.

44. The Newcastle Commissioners did not criticise the curriculum of the Training Colleges in any important particulars. But there is not much humanism apparent in it. The formalism which so often warped the public school idea of Education is seen setting its stamp upon the Elementary School so soon as it attempts to grow. English, indeed, makes an appearance, but only as a pale reflection of the discipline of classical studies. There is no reference to the writing of English, and no suggestion that literature conveys ideas, deals with life, affords enjoyment. Education is viewed as the forming of the mind by the study of certain subjects, independently of experience of life, and as attainable in full measure by a small minority only, since

mind-forming subjects are apparently deemed beyond the reach of women and elementary school children. For them must suffice the humbler alternative of education as useful and wholesome knowledge.

45. This " useful knowledge " theory of education gained much ground during the first half of the nineteenth century. In 1827 the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge was founded. Lord Brougham was its first president. His enthusiasm may be illustrated from an account which he gave in the House of Commons in 1835 of the results achieved in the Borough Road School of the British and Foreign Society. After praising the children's skill in calculation, he proceeds, " But this marvellous display was not confined to arithmetic : among other things, I saw a boy take a slate, without having any copy, and solely from memory, trace upon it the outline of Palestine and Syria, marking all the variations of the coast, the bays, harbours, and creeks, inserting the towns and rivers, and adding their ancient as well as their modern names. Now all this is real, substantial, useful knowledge, fitted alike to exercise and to unfold the faculties of the mind, and to lay up a store of learning, at once the solace of the vacant moments, and the helpmate of the working hours in after years." But the diffusion of useful knowledge, as practised in the Training Colleges, appeared to the Commissioners to be capable of being carried too far. Mere " cram," they pointed out, " destroys the intellectual appetite, and makes knowledge an object of disgust."

46. In view of the conditions which we have described, it is not surprising that a Training College Principal, whose evidence the Commissioners quote at length, should say : " In very few cases is a taste for reading formed among trained pupils. It will not, I suspect, be found that Schoolmasters are a very studious or a very literary body." Nor is it surprising that Matthew Arnold should lament, as he does in his reports, the absence from the schools of genuine culture. Speaking of the pupil teachers in 1852, he says : " Young men, whose knowledge of grammar, of the minutest

details of geographical and historical facts, and above all, of mathematics, is surprising, often cannot paraphrase a plain passage of prose or poetry without totally misapprehending it, or write half a page of composition on any subject without falling into gross blunders of taste and expression." He would have them give more time to " study of portions of the best English authors, and Composition, which would tend to elevate and humanise " them. In his report for 1860, he says: " It is not enough remembered how, in many cases, his reading-book forms the whole literature, except his Bible, of the child attending a primary school. If, then, instead of literature, his reading-book, as is too often the case, presents him with a jejune encyclopædia of positive information, the result is that he has, except his Bible, no literature, no *humanising* instruction at all." But the remedy prescribed by the Newcastle Commissioners was by no means calculated to introduce into the schools the spirit of humanism. Instead of trying to put a soul into elementary education, they branded it as a necessarily soulless thing. Their main conclusion was that it was essential to find " some constant and stringent motive to induce the teachers to do that part of their duty which is most unpleasant and most important," *i.e.* the teaching of the elements. " There is only one way," they reported, " of securing this result, which is to institute a searching examination by competent authority of every child in every school to which grants are to be paid . . . and to make the prospects and position of the teacher dependent, to a considerable extent, on the results of this examination." The Revised Code of 1862 carried this recommendation into effect.

47. Under the new dispensation there was little encouragement for English as we understand and have tried to explain the term. Educational results, it was assumed, could be weighed with mechanical exactitude, and their monetary equivalent determined. Not only was the conception of education debased, but the grants paid to the schools were reduced, and the supply of pupil teachers cut

down. The curriculum was practically limited to reading, writing, and arithmetic, and the teacher was still further discouraged from regarding the thinking powers of his pupils as a matter for concern. Sir James Kay-Shuttleworth protested bitterly. Speaking in 1866 he refers* to the "aversion to letters" which a "mean mechanical drudgery of spelling, writing and ciphering would produce," and asks: "Why is apparent sanction given to the idea that the schooling of the workman's child ceases at eleven years of age, and that he can do no more than learn to read, write and cipher in the elementary school?". Matthew Arnold, reporting on elementary schools in 1867, says: "I find in them, in general, if I compare them with their former selves, a deadness, a slackness, and a discouragement which are not the signs and accompaniments of progress." This he attributes to the school legislation of 1862. Again, in 1869, he writes: "The circle of the children's reading has thus been narrowed and impoverished all the year for the sake of a *result* at the end of it, and the *result* is an illusion."

48. A few more quotations from his reports will indicate the meagre quality of the English teaching in the years which followed. He writes in 1871, "What is comprised under the word literature is in itself the greatest power available in education; of this power it is not too much to say that in our elementary schools at present no use is made at all." In 1874, "It seems as if, during the last four and twenty years, there had been effected no progress at all towards giving our elementary schools what they most want, the mental apprehensiveness and resource which letters impart." In 1878, "A power of reading, well trained, and well guided, is perhaps the best among the gifts which it is the business of our elementary schools to bestow; it is in their power to bestow it, yet it is bestowed in much fewer cases than we imagine." In 1880, he states as his conviction: "The ideal we should propose to ourselves for the school-course is the ideal admirably fixed long ago by

* Sir James Kay-Shuttleworth: *Social Problems.*

Comenius. 'The aim is to train generally all who are born men to all which is human.'"

In the same report he writes with great earnestness of the importance of poetry in the schools. "Good poetry," he says, "does undoubtedly tend to form the soul and character; it tends to beget a love of beauty and of truth in alliance together, it suggests, however indirectly, high and noble principles of action, and it inspires the emotion so helpful in making principles operative. Hence its extreme importance to all of us; but in our elementary schools its importance seems to me to be at present quite extraordinary . . . I should like, above all, to see this poetry exercise made no longer an extra subject, but a part of the regular work of the school." And these, it should be remembered, are the words of a poet in his thirtieth year of service as a School Inspector.

49. The Revised Code did not require any child to be tested in reading from a book which he had not previously studied, nor did it require any composition. But owing to the extent to which the attention of the schools became restricted to the elements, an increased grant was offered, in 1867, to schools which taught at least one "specific" subject. "Specific" subjects might be taught to individual pupils in the upper standards. Grammar and English Literature were among those which could be selected. In 1875 the proportion of children examined in "specific" subjects was 3·7 per cent. In that year Grammar, Geography and History became "class" subjects, *i.e.* subjects which were not compulsory, but which, if taught at all, had to be taught throughout the school above Standard I. Composition also appeared at this time, children in Standard V. and upwards being expected to write from memory the substance of a story read aloud to them. English Literature remained a "specific" subject, the syllabus (given in 1876) being as follows:—

"1st Year.—One hundred lines of poetry, got by heart, with knowledge of meaning and allusions. Writing a letter on a simple subject.

"2nd Year.—Two hundred lines of poetry, not before brought up, repeated; with knowledge of meaning and allusions. Writing a paraphrase of a passage of easy prose.

"3rd Year.—Three hundred lines of poetry, not before brought up, repeated; with knowledge and meaning of allusions. Writing a letter or statement, the heads of the topics to be given by the Inspector."

Under this syllabus English was extremely popular. But in 1882 its character was changed. It became a "class" subject, consisting essentially of Grammar, and was made compulsory if any class subjects were taken.

50. It was in 1890 that the system of payment by results was abandoned, as the result of the Report of a Commission which had been appointed, with Lord Cross as Chairman, to inquire into the working of the Elementary Education Acts. The Commission considered that the system ought to be modified and relaxed, "in the interests equally of the scholars, of the teachers, and of education itself." They perceived the bad results of the practice by which the spelling and grammatical tests were taken from some part of the books prescribed for reading, which were accordingly studied from the point of view of those tests rather than of appreciation of the subject matter. In reviewing their evidence they say: "It is alleged that the system at present in use fails to inspire the children with any real interest in reading." "It is said that there is not time to get them to read with intelligence the amount required by the Code, so that they get to hate their books." After hearing many complaints about the quantity of grammar involved in "English," they recommended that English should cease to be a compulsory "class" subject, and hinted that it might be treated as something more than an exercise in grammar, or the "getting by heart" of so many lines of poetry. They added the following significant remark: "A suggestion has been made that 'advanced reading,' by which we understand intelligent reading in some standard authors, might be allowed to take the place of Grammar in the Class Subject

of English." English so taught as "to give the children an adequate knowledge of their mother tongue" they considered an essential subject in every school.

51. These recommendations were excellent so far as they went. But in spite of this theoretic advance the New Code of 1890 left English as a "class" subject still consisting almost entirely of parsing and analysis, and as it was no longer compulsory, the number of schools taking it rapidly declined. Mr. E. G. A. Holmes reports in 1893, "It is frequently said that children take no interest in grammar, and the report is, I believe, as a rule well founded." Another Inspector reports, in 1894, "English Grammar has disappeared in all but a few schools, to the joy of children and teacher." "History," says another, "is slowly taking the place of English."

The Inspectors' reports on the teaching of reading at this period criticise it severely, though not without some mention of improvement. One, written in 1890, states: "The mischief begins in the infant school, if children learn to read without following the sense of what they read. As Tom Tulliver learned Latin without knowing that people ever used Latin for writing and talking, so children may learn to read printed matter without finding out that the language or talk of their reading books is the language of their ordinary talk." Another Inspector, in 1893, thinks, "that the reading in the lower classes will never improve so long as it is left to the most inexperienced pupil-teachers and even monitors to teach it."

52. Meanwhile, a fresh impetus, but not one in the direction of humanism, had come to the schools. Under the influence of grants from the Science and Art Department, the teaching of Science had developed out of all proportion to the teaching of literary subjects. This system, according to the Report of the Bryce Commission on Secondary Education, issued in 1895, "made possible the creation of higher grade elementary schools or organised science schools, and so has added secondary education of a peculiar and limited character as a crown to our elementary system." These

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schools, says the Report, have had to cultivate those subjects for which they can be paid, and " hence has come a narrow curriculum, a neglect of literature, and an unsuitable style of instruction." But it was decided in 1901 (by the Cockerton Judgment) that the Elementary Schools could not legally provide this advanced teaching.

The period from 1895 to 1902 saw important developments. Composition was made an alternative to Dictation in the lower standards. Class subjects were done away with, and English, including Grammar, was expected in every school. The annual examination in elementary subjects was abolished. The Elementary Schools thus achieved freedom, though they were not yet prepared to make full use of it.

53. Meanwhile great developments had been taking place in the Secondary Schools. Modern subjects had secured recognition, and modern sides had been widely established, though the modern side movement was far from proceeding on humanistic lines, and took very little account of English. Still, it may be said that the days in which most of those now in responsible educational positions were themselves at school or college, or gaining their early experience of teaching, were days in which many traditions were seen to be open to question. In the present century there has been much searching of heart and much valuable experiment. What the teaching of English ought to be is widely realised, and a new life has entered into it in numbers of schools. Pedantry and formalism are now recognised in the main for what they are. In certain respects, indeed, the reaction has gone too far. The revolt against the imposing upon English of the forms of Latin grammar has led many teachers to throw grammar entirely overboard. But a warning is still needed against the prejudices and misconceptions of the past. The old classical system is still responsible for a warping of method in the teaching of English, for a futile application of time-honoured forms, as, *e.g.* the rules of prosody, for blindness to matters of the first importance, such as how the language is spoken and read.

And the habit of indifference gives way but slowly, even when its indefensibility is admitted. "The dominance of Latin for many a day made the study of English seem despicable and unworthy,"* and nowhere is custom more sacrosanct than in the schools.

54. Yet the danger confronting English to-day is not so much indifference as distraction. Our references to a succession of educational principles will have suggested this. Those who maintain that education is primarily a discipline of the mental powers still seek that discipline in subjects far removed from the disturbing influences of modern life: mainly in mathematics and in classical studies. Simultaneously others, urging that knowledge is power, load the youthful mind with more than it can properly assimilate, undermining its capacity for independent thought. Learning by doing is another concurrent educational gospel. Ever more self-assertive again becomes the utilitarian principle, which would rank subjects according to the degree in which they supposedly contribute to material success. Or it may be that all educational principles are engulfed in the notion that education is the satisfaction of the external examiner. None of these principles bears, on the face of it, a demand for English, and in the attempt to show deference to all of them at once, English is liable to be crowded out. Nor is English, regarded as a subject, compactly enough built to do well in the scramble. The following are statements by Headmasters or Headmistresses of Secondary Schools. "In view of the increasingly large number of pupils who attend Secondary Schools from homes where the standard of English is low, and where books are few, more time is needed for this subject, both in school and in home preparation, but the difficulty is great with the present full curriculum, especially in the case of girls' schools, where Domestic Science and Needlework demand time, and where the school and preparation periods should be shorter than those of boys' schools." "I should like to be able to give *much* more time to English in the Middle and Lower School, but . . .

* *Essays on a Liberal Education*, 1868.

it is not a case of giving more time to subjects, it is a case of leaving out. I will give more time to English if we may abolish, say, Latin or Chemistry for example." "More time is wanted than present curricula are able to allow." "The most helpful change would be a reduction in the mathematical requirements of public examinations. It would be much better for the girls to give more time to English."

55. It appears to us a very grave matter that schools such as these are should be restrained by external forces from carrying out their own educational convictions and thus discouraged from relating their teaching to any educational convictions at all. For the only remedy against the menace which we are now considering is that all these varied principles at present competing with each other to the distraction of teachers and pupils should be duly brought under the ultimate purpose of education, which we have called guidance in the acquiring of experience, or the giving of a wide outlook on life. Education must, as we have urged already, bear directly upon life. Its failure, in so far as it has failed, has been due to its turning aside from life and reality. For this it has paid, and is still paying, a very heavy penalty, the penalty of indifference and scepticism on the part of people in general. A passage from a speech made by Mr. Robert Lowe, in 1868, may help to bring out our point.

56. "First," he says, "I recommend to your notice a subject generally overlooked in our public schools, and that is—what do you think?—the English Language; the language of Bacon and Shakespeare; the language of Pitt and Charles Fox; the language of Byron and Shelley—a language richer, probably, and containing more varied treasures than the treasures contained in any other language—which began to be formed and fashioned sooner than any other in Europe, except the Italian, which it surpasses in everything, except mere sound, that constitutes the beauty of a language. Is it not time that we who speak that language, read that language, so much of whose

success in life depends on how we can mould that language; we who make our bargains in that language, who make love in it, should know something about it; that our care should not be limited to the reading of penny, threepenny or even sixpenny newspapers; but that we should, at least in our boyhood, be called on to remember what sort of writers England produced in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; that we should know our own tongue theoretically as well as practically. I can only speak from my own experience. During the last two years that I was at school I was, if not actually idle, at least not wholly devoted to Latin and Greek, and I had some qualms of conscience on the subject. But there was a certain bookcase in the corner of the study which was full of standard and sterling English books; I spent my time in reading those English books, and I felt like a truant and ashamed of myself, when I did so, because I was stealing those hours from the study of Latin and Greek. I can only say that I owe my success in life to those stolen hours—that the power of being able to write and speak my native language with some precision and force has been more valuable to me than all the rest I have learned." *

We have included this quotation because it points out emphatically and yet unconsciously the test to which educational theory and practice must constantly be put, the test of application to life. The sentiment which it reveals is not the less interesting as coming from the author of the Revised Code, with reference to which Matthew Arnold wrote in 1871, "the whole use that the Government makes of the mighty engine of literature in the education of the working classes amounts to little more, even when most successful, than the giving them the power to read the newspapers." Now, as then, there is the danger that a true instinct for humanism may be smothered by the demand for definite measurable results, especially the passing of examinations in a variety of subjects, and if those who are anxious to

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* *Life and Letters of Viscount Sherbrooke.*

do justice to English find it so hard to carry out their desire, what is to be expected from those who still remain indifferent?

57. It will be noted that in these remarks we have given to "English" a very wide significance. We have looked upon it almost as convertible with thought, of which we have called it the very stuff and process. We have treated it as a subject, but at the same time as a method, the principal method whereby education may achieve its ultimate aim of giving a wide outlook on life. When that aim is kept in view, it will be found that English as a subject must take not any place which may happen to be vacant, but the first place; and that English as a method must have entry everywhere.

CHAPTER III.

ENGLISH AT THE ELEMENTARY STAGE.

I.—PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS.

58. From several points of view the Elementary Schools form the most important part of the wide field which our terms of reference require us to survey. They are by far the largest part. The vast majority of English children pass through them: one-seventh of the population of England is attending them to-day. Moreover, only about 6 per cent. of their pupils receive any further full-time education. The rest enter at once upon the business of earning their living. For these, when the Act of 1918 is fully in operation, further part-time education will become compulsory, but at present, for many of them, it is not even available. Again, the period of life with which the Elementary School deals, is, from the point of view of the teaching of English, the most important one. It is the period when the basis of education must be laid, and this basis, as we have already shown, must consist of English.*

Hence, the importance of English in the Elementary Schools is absolute and unchallengeable. It is not so much a subject as the body and vital principle of all school activity. This is not yet adequately recognised. At present the tradition of older Codes still weighs heavily on methods and curriculum. Teachers seem, at times, to be unaware or afraid of their liberty, and to desire the restrictions that no longer bind them. The Elementary School might exert a more permanently humanising influence on its products if it were not for the mistake of some teachers in treating English as they treat Arithmetic, for example, namely, as a mere subject, with a limited matter of its own, and a right to no more than a limited share in their vigorous exertions.

* Introduction, § 13.

Those exertions have been frequently misapplied, with the result that, of all the school lessons, the English has often had least effect on the pupils' minds, and sometimes made least appeal to their liking. In the better schools, much of this has been altogether reformed, but even now, when methods of teaching have improved and the matter taught has changed beyond recognition, there is evidence that teachers have not really envisaged the right dimensions of English in the Elementary Schools, and that they are expending their very admirable enthusiasm and skill upon it still as a specific and limited subject, or worse, as a collection of detached subjects.

59. We recognise the remarkable humanising and civilising influence that the Elementary Schools have exerted, and increasingly exert. We also recognise that the expectations formed of them are often out of all proportion to their opportunities. The fact that they have accomplished much is far less emphasised than the fact that much remains to be accomplished. The public sometimes appear to expect them to implant in their pupils every mental and moral excellence. Reference to national shortcomings is frequently accompanied by unreasonable reproach of the schools for failing to remove them. The early age at which they lose the children is not taken into account. Yet in the great ordeal which the nation has just passed through, the schools, to a certain extent, came into their own. Many who had been inclined to discount them as factors in social and intellectual progress discovered them to be a power in the land. The discipline, adaptability, and intelligence manifested by the people at large made converts everywhere to the cause of education. Men serving with the forces revealed an unanticipated eagerness for instruction. The intelligence and capacity for expression shown in many of the letters sent home from the Front surprised all who were unaware of what the schools had been doing, and furnished them with a host of testimonials.

60. Nevertheless, it is on the literary side that children from the Elementary Schools are apt to be found most

deficient. Among those who have the best opportunity for judging are teachers at Secondary Schools, where selected Elementary School children form a proportion of the pupils. There these children can most easily be compared with others who come from a different school and home environment. When judged by the Secondary School standard they often prove, we are told, "good at Arithmetic, but weak in English."

This is far from being universally true but it is what might be expected under the conditions, and it is very desirable that its significance should be perceived. It does not mean that the Elementary Schools have neglected English. They give a great deal more attention to English than do schools of any other type. It means that it is far harder to teach English in an average Elementary School than to teach it anywhere else, and that this applies to English only, and not to other subjects. Where other subjects are harder to teach, it is lack of English that is the cause.

The great difficulty of teachers in Elementary Schools in many districts is that they have to fight against the powerful influence of evil habits of speech contracted in home and street. The teachers' struggle is thus not with ignorance but with a perverted power. That makes their work the harder, but it must also make their zeal the fiercer. A child with home advantages hears English used well, and grows up to use it well himself. He speaks grammatically, he acquires a wide vocabulary, he collects ideas. When he wants to read he can procure books, and can sit in comparative peace in a warm and well-lit room. The English which he has learnt at home may suffice, independently of any school teaching, to keep him well ahead of his classroom neighbour. The latter's English may be a negative quantity, requiring great pains on his teacher's part to cancel out before any positive progress can be made. We are not surprised to be told that some children leave school almost inarticulate so far as anything like educated English is concerned.

61. Plainly, then, the first and chief duty of the Elementary School is to give its pupils speech—to make them articulate and civilised human beings, able to communicate themselves in speech and writing, and able to receive the communication of others. It must be remembered that children, until they can readily receive such communication, are entirely cut off from the life and thought and experience of the race embodied in human words. Indeed, until they have been given civilised speech it is useless to talk of continuing their education, for, in a real sense, their education has not been begun. For such children, then, English is, as we have said, not a subject of instruction, but the basis of school life ; the lesson in English is not merely one occasion for the inculcation of knowledge, it is an initiation into the corporate life of man. Where this is not clearly recognised, elementary education fails in its main purpose.

We believe that, in many schools, what we desire is being done—that, in actual fact, the aim and standard of the English lessons are as high in the best Elementary Schools as in any schools in the country ; we are less sure, however, that the broad view of English we have shown to be necessary is very generally taken. This is not always the fault of the teachers. There are still people in positions of influence who are inclined to regard a humane education of the lower classes as subversive of public order. We believe that view to be wrong. The fact that the majority of elementary school children will have to take up some form of manual labour, perhaps of unskilled labour, must not limit the kind of education they are to receive, for, as we have shown, education is a preparation for life, not, in the first place, for livelihood ; it is the development of the whole man, and not the mere training of a factory hand.

62. There are two delusions about the education of the people ; it is difficult to say which is the more mischievous. There is the delusion, still sometimes surviving, that the only education which they ought to have is that which trains their hands to the plough or their eyes to the needle,

which has exclusively in view the making of miners or factory girls, engineers, or cooks. That is the educational "lie in the soul," whether it comes from the selfishness of those who wish to employ, or the shortsightedness of those who wish for employment. The whole of our Report is a protest against it. But there is also an opposite delusion not in itself so grave, but equally, or almost equally, unfortunate in its results. In fact, those results have probably done more than anything else to discredit the policy of national education which most European countries adopted during the nineteenth century. It is the delusion, not that manual labour unfits a man for education, but that education makes him too good for manual labour. This unfortunate notion is responsible for the armies of lawyers without clients, doctors without patients, ill-paid clerks and half starved civil servants, all alike superfluous and discontented who are the burden and the disgrace of some countries of Europe. Education suffers the reproach of them, and will continue to do so till the root error which produces them be destroyed. That error is the unhappy belief that education somehow involves a black coat on the back and a pen in the hand. We cannot too strongly reprobate this delusion, which is equally disastrous for education and for healthy national life.

The truth is, that both these delusions are rooted in the same misconception. Both the idea that the man who works with his hands ought not to have a humane education, and the idea that when he has got one he cannot continue to work with his hands, grew out of the idea that education is exclusively an affair of vocation. That is just what it is not, at least in its earlier stages. All are boys and girls before, and men and women after, they become clergymen or blacksmiths, schoolmistresses or housemaids, and it is as men and women, not as clergymen or housemaids, that education should primarily think of them. We do not underrate the importance of vocational preparation which should not be, and is not, neglected in the later stages of education. But the first thought of education must be fulness of life,

not professional success. That is the only universal educational ideal.

Time Required for English.

63. When we turn to the internal economy of the schools, the first question to be considered is that of time. The *Report of a Conference on the teaching of English in London Elementary Schools*, first issued in 1909, which has deservedly exerted much influence both in and outside London, recommended that from 9 to 10 hours weekly in Boys' Schools, and from 10 to 11 hours in Girls' schools, should be allotted to English. The time generally allotted throughout the country appears from our evidence to be less than this. From 6 to 8 hours seems usual. Occasionally, only 5, or even 4½ hours are allowed, but in these cases some home preparation is generally done. In one large Boys' school of which the Head Master writes, "Eighty per cent. of my pupils enter Secondary Schools, and are the children of parents fairly well educated; hence we are not handicapped to a great extent by faults of speech acquired outside school," nine hours are allotted to English. Yet the Head Master says: "Having regard to the other subjects to be taught, I do not feel this time can be increased; but it is not sufficient to reach the standard I should wish to see attained. In the upper classes I should like to spend far more time in the study of English literature." On the other hand, a Head Master told us that he had greatly reduced the time given to English by the elder children, giving it, instead, to History and Geography, though, "as it was devoted mainly to private study and to the writing of essays in those particular subjects, it might still in a way be called English." "But it should be part," he added, "of the work of each teacher to secure, in his own subject, accurate and appropriate expression of the child's ideas. Although this arrangement appears to give shorter time to English, the real effect is that the time is distributed more satisfactorily. For the teacher of English is then free to devote his attention largely to Literature,

to the development of taste and style in writing, and generally, to the cultivation of some appreciation of the variety, flexibility, and beauty of the language."

64. Such evidence as this points clearly to the need for making ample provision for the study of literature. Given a teacher who can make his pupils appreciate literature, it would be folly to minimise his value by niggardly treatment of literature on the Time Table. But so far as speech and expression are concerned, the problem does not present itself to us as primarily one of time. We do not suggest that the time now allotted to English should be reduced. We should court disaster in many schools by so doing. But we make no general recommendation that more time should be given to English. We prefer to emphasise again the point that every teacher is a teacher of English, because every teacher is a teacher in English. The whole of the time table is, therefore, available for the teaching of English. If every teacher showed realisation of this in his actual practice, the results achieved in our schools would, we are convinced, undergo a great change. The undue isolation of English has often made the teaching, not only of English but of other subjects, ineffective. It is impossible to teach any subject without teaching English ; it is almost equally impossible to teach English without teaching something else. Accordingly, we do not urge teachers to aim at enlarging the time table compartment assigned to English until there is room for all the English teaching needed. It could not be done, and even if it could, it is the reverse of what we desire to see. We wish to see English constantly overflowing its own compartment, and penetrating into all the rest.

65. Further, English must, in any case, be the first subject, in point of time, to receive specific attention. It cannot afford to wait. Children usually enter the Infants' Department or Infants' Class at 4 or 5 years of age ; in the poorer quarters of the towns, where training in English is most urgently needed, they are fortunately sent to school the earliest, sometimes soon after they are three. If a

Nursery School is available, they may have come under experienced supervision almost from infancy. But at whatever age a child first comes into the teacher's hands it is then that his definite training in English must begin. Other subjects can wait and take no harm. If a child postpones the study, say, of Arithmetic, or History, or Geography he simply lacks them for the time being, and when he does begin, his more fully developed powers of mind enable him to progress very rapidly. But English, being not merely a school subject, but also a "home" or "life" subject, is always being taught, often badly, certainly in haphazard fashion, independently of the school. Delay in counteracting by good teaching at school bad habits in the use of the mother tongue acquired outside, adds immensely to the work to be done later. An adverse balance is continually mounting up, until, perhaps, it is too late for it ever to be wiped out.

Speech Training.

66. Speech training must be undertaken from the outset, and should be continued all through the period of schooling. Teachers of infants sometimes complain that when the children come to school, they can scarcely speak at all. They should regard this rather as an advantage. There is often a kind of race as to which should succeed in setting its stamp upon the children's speech, the influence of the teacher, or that of the street or home. But, unfortunately, the teacher often makes no serious effort to win, and turns aside to other things that might well be done later, as though winning were a matter of no consequence. The definite training of the ear and of the vocal organs is not one of the things to which tradition has paid regard. Uncouth speech has been assumed to be the natural heritage of the children for whom elementary schools were originally instituted. Actually, the accomplishment of clear and correct speech is the one definite accomplishment which the child is entitled to demand from the Infant School. But apart from some excellent pioneer work in individual

schools and by individual teachers, speech training has been strangely neglected. We wish to emphasise its importance most strongly.

In London, it is true, a good deal has been done. Classes for teachers in phonetics and voice production have been largely attended, and the Board of Education's Divisional Inspector for London tells us that they have gone some way towards getting rid of undesirable forms of London speech A Conference on *Speech Training in London Schools and Colleges* which reported in 1916, has made definite recommendations for the improvement of enunciation and pronunciation, involving systematic study of the way in which speech sounds are formed, and the use of some system of sound representation, based strictly on the principle, " one sound one symbol." But even in London, speech training does not receive full attention, and outside London, with certain exceptions, there is marked indifference on the whole question. It is lamentable, in a great number of schools, to hear the children habitually mispronouncing words, or mumbling rather than pronouncing them, while their teachers, who may show great concern at inaccuracies where the written word is concerned, seem to accept a pitiably low standard of speech as a thing which must be taken for granted, and scarcely calls for comment.

67. It is emphatically the business of the Elementary School to teach all its pupils who either speak a definite dialect or whose speech is disfigured by vulgarisms, to speak standard English, and to speak it clearly, and with expression. Our witnesses are agreed that this can be done, provided that definite and systematic teaching is given from the outset. It is not sufficient merely to correct the various errors of pronunciation as they occur, or to insist on the children " speaking out." They should learn to recognise every sound in standard English, should observe for themselves how sounds are produced and modified by the position of the speech organs, and should practise producing them properly. The really scientific method, of course, would be to associate each sound with

a phonetic symbol. This may seem to some teachers an alarming suggestion, but the learning of the symbols will be found a very simple matter both by teachers and children, and the teacher needs some means, which our system of spelling unfortunately does not afford, of referring to the sounds of the spoken language without actually producing them. The real difficulty will be found, our witnesses assure us, not in learning the symbols but in combating the causes which prevent production of the correct sounds, such as habitual lip laziness, or inability to detect the less obvious differences.

An objection sometimes made to the use of phonetic symbols is that they tend to accelerate, or at any rate to confirm, the modern tendency to slur over unaccented vowel sounds, giving to most of them the sound " er." It is outrageous, we are told, that such pronunciations as " mountin" or " pickcher " should receive any certificate of respectability. But this objection is really a protest against an alleged misuse of phonetic symbols, rather than against any use of phonetic symbols at all. They may be made to bolster up one pronunciation just as easily as another. The problem is not really one of the use of phonetic symbols, but of what standard English pronunciation is. This is a much debated question, but for our present purpose it should suffice to say that it is a pronunciation free from provincialisms and vulgarisms.

68. While we consider that the use of phonetic symbols is the scientific method of speech training, we realise that good results can be, and are, obtained, independently of any scientific system, by teachers who make a genuine effort to improve the children's speech. A Head Mistress writes : " No scientific phonetic system has been employed in the school, but special attention is given to speech training, (*a*) by means of voice production in musical exercises, (*b*) by the preparatory work done in reading lessons, (*c*) by imitation of correct sounds, (*d*) by children's discussions in some English lessons, (*e*)by encouragement throughout the day." A witness who has conducted a school attended

mainly by children from the slum quarters of a large town said that she found it possible to train the children to speak correctly, "speech being to a remarkable degree a matter of imitation." Another witness stated that 'dramatisation by children had a marvellous effect on their speech."

69. We do not advocate the teaching of standard English on any grounds of social "superiority," but because it is manifestly desirable that all English people should be capable of speaking so as to be fully intelligible to each other and because inability to speak standard English is in practice a serious handicap in many ways. And we may quote the words of a witness who describes her methods "of guiding the child to that refinement of speech which, in a subtle manner, is an index to the mind, and helps to place it beyond the reach of vulgarity of thought and action." We do not, however, suggest that the suppression of dialect should be aimed at, but that children who speak a dialect, should, as often happens, become bi-lingual, speaking standard English too. Every dialect has, for those who have been brought up to speak it, intimate associations of its own, and, side by side with standard English, dialect will probably persist and be used in the playground and the street. In many cases, indeed, it will deserve to persist, on account of its historic interest. The witnesses whom we have heard on the subject of dialect are not agreed in their views of the likelihood of its continuance. But they agree that this is not a matter in which the schools ought deliberately to try to exert influence.*

70. The position of the English language in the world affords another argument for all English children being taught English as distinct from a dialect of English. At the request of the Northern Peace Congress which met in Stockholm in 1919, the Northern Peace Union addressed an inquiry to representatives of countries where none of the three great languages (English, German, and French) are spoken, as to which was, in their opinion, the most suitable language for universal use. Fifty-four replies were received.

* Compare §144.

Of these, one was in favour of German, eight of French, one of Latin or Spanish, five of Ido or Esperanto. No less than 29, a majority of the whole, were in favour of English, and the report of the inquiry concludes: "If English is to become the international language, everybody who wishes to learn it must be given an opportunity. It must be taught in all the schools of the world—optional in Elementary Schools, and compulsory in the Higher Schools." If this is a measure of the prestige which the English language possesses abroad, it surely merits more attention in the schools of England, if only from the point of view of a practical asset. English children, required by law to attend school, are surely entitled to be taught, in a scientific and effective way, the accepted speech of their own country.

Oral Expression.

71. Speech training is intimately connected with, and is, indeed, included in, training in oral expression. We have only dealt with it separately in order to emphasise its importance. Oral expression, again, must be the concern of every Infant School from the very first. This is generally realised, and conversation forms a part of every lesson in all good Infant Schools.

Many children, we have remarked, when they first come to school, can scarcely talk at all. Sometimes, a witness told us, they cannot even name their eyes, ears, toes, and so forth. But by means of stories, rhymes, songs, and games, and the various informal methods of the modern Infant School, they soon acquire a considerable vocabulary, and learn to talk freely and naturally on things within the range of their observation and experience. The atmosphere of the best Infant Schools is that of a good home. In a home in which their elders associate freely with the children, read to them, talk with them, take them for walks, answer their constant questions, supply them with plenty of books, the power of self-expression acquired by quite young children is indeed surprising. These conditions it is necessary for the Infant School to reproduce. There is no need for the children to

start reading and writing till they have become possessed of a large vocabulary. "They should be read to," says a witness, "rather than talked to, in order that they may be saved from the meagre vocabulary of the teacher." Teachers will need to be specially on their guard to prevent faults in the use of language, acquired outside school, from gaining a hold on them. Such faults are, of course, quite distinct from the quaint analogies and charming phrases which the children hit upon as they seek in their limited store of words to describe a new experience. A little boy not three years old referred the other day to the dog's kennel as his "garage." Many similar instances will occur to everyone. They are perfectly delightful, and indicate an inventive imagination which it would be a sad mistake to repress. The real mistakes have their source outside the child, and it is upon these that the teacher's powers of correction must be concentrated.

72. In large town schools the classes often contain as many as 60 children, who, in consequence, cannot receive the individual attention they need. In the smaller schools, especially in the country, the Infant classes are often in the care of unqualified and far from competent teachers. Still, the Infant Schools are, on the whole, remarkably successful in developing the children's powers of self-expression. They have emancipated themselves from the repressive methods of the past, and often achieve most delightful and convincing results by the simple method of providing conditions which allow free play to the children's natural mental growth.

73. When the infants pass, at about seven years of age, into the Senior School, they should experience no abrupt change of method. In practice, however, a disastrous break often occurs. On this point Dr. Kimmins gave important evidence. "He had been struck by the fact that the essays of children below 11 were much more interesting and original than those of older children, and it was his impression that this was the result of the kind of education they received. An inhibition of their powers of self-expression

seemed to follow upon children's removal from the infants' department to the upper department, where there was no longer the same delightful story-telling, or material on which they could cultivate their imagination. They absorbed information which they had not time to think around, and began to commit things to memory instead. The result was an immediate falling off in their power of self-expression."

Any such discontinuance of oral methods as is here indicated is wholly at variance with the recommendations of our witnesses. "Oral narration," says a Head Master, should not be confined to the Junior School, but should be employed throughout . . . Children of all ages and capacities look upon it as a perfectly natural proceeding on their part. They enjoy it. Vocabulary grows, range of ideas extends, a higher standard of speech is cultivated." "To speak well," says another Head Master, "is, for the great majority of men, much more important than writing; oral exercises are therefore more important than written ones. What is more, they are the readiest means to fluency and naturalness in writing; and neglect of them in senior schools is the cause of that stiff, conventional, lifeless, style which makes much composition equally tiresome to write and to read." And, to quote the "Suggestions" issued by the Board of Education, "In the instruction of children from seven to ten years of age, every lesson should still afford opportunity for free expression and for developing the power of connected and continuous speech."

74. One of the obstacles to the due continuance of conversational methods is the idea sometimes prevalent in the Senior School that it is now time to put away such childish things as talk and play. In the lower classes the teachers hold it to be their special function to give the children a "thorough grounding." So it is; they are perfectly right. But misconceptions often exist about the nature of this "grounding." Too frequently it is conceived of as a fixed quantum of definite knowledge, or of precisely measurable skill, *e.g.*, in Arithmetic, little attempt being made to draw

out the child's ideas. As a result, his real self is forced back into subconsciousness, and he becomes tongue-tied. It is often not realised that so-called knowledge is not knowledge if the thinking powers are not applied to it, and that the only way to get the child to think about it and show the teacher whether it means anything to him or not, is to get him to talk about it. It then becomes a personal experience instead of a mere form of words. Another obstacle has been the idea that oral methods involve a kind of "lecture" system, the children remaining more or less passive while the teacher retails by word of mouth information which they could more profitably obtain themselves from books. What we recommend, of course, is not this, but rather, to quote a witness, "an extended use of easy natural conversation between teacher and child, or groups of children, on literature, history, geography, &c., in place of the delivery of the formal lesson."

75. We wish, therefore, very strongly to insist that training in continuous oral expression should be brought to the front as the most indispensable part of the school course. Without it the junior classes will fail in their object of "grounding" the children. The senior classes, also, will find that their teaching of English will have but ill-balanced results if all the speaking is done out of school, all the reading and writing in school. Here, in addition to dramatic work, debates and brief "lectures" by the pupils themselves may be found helpful. Oral work is, we are convinced, the foundation upon which proficiency in the writing of English must be based; more than that, it is a condition of the successful teaching of all that is worth being taught.

The Writing of English.

76. Our witnesses emphasise the great importance of the writing of English, or "Composition," as the climax of the school work. They agree in making a claim for it which puts it in a new place as a factor in education. They feel that in teaching Composition they are concerned directly

and immediately with the growth of the mind. Dr. Ballard, for instance, told us that investigation showed proficiency in Composition to be the surest sign of a high degree of mental intelligence, and that it was the most valuable exercise in the school for the purpose of developing the specific abilities which enter most largely into our lives. Mr. Hartog claimed that the teaching of Composition develops individuality, that it has, indeed, a transforming influence on the children, on their whole outlook, on their whole judgment, on their sense of responsibility. We ourselves fully endorse these views. Composition cannot be regarded merely as a subject. It is the measure of all that has been truly learnt, and of the habits of mind which have been formed. In fact, the capacity for self-expression is essentially the measure of the success or failure of a school, at any rate on the intellectual side. If the habit of merely perfunctory or artificial writing is allowed to usurp its place the avenue to mental development will have been partly closed.

77. We have already asserted our belief that there has been marked progress in teaching the art of writing English and that this progress is continuing. But we must admit that the business firms whom we have consulted are for the most part very critical of the results. Thus, Messrs. Vickers, Ltd., "find great difficulty in obtaining junior clerks who can speak and write English clearly and correctly, especially those aged from 15 to 16 years." Messrs. Lever Brothers, Ltd., say "it is a great surprise and disappointment to us to find that our young employees are so hopelessly deficient in their command of English." Boots' Pure Drug Co. say: "Teaching of English in the present day schools produces a very limited command of the English language. . . . Our candidates do not appreciate the value of shades of meaning, and while able to do imaginative composition, show weakness in work which requires accurate description, or careful arrangement of detail."

We regret to note the suspicion of school methods which these extracts indicate. Probably it is to some extent a legacy from the past; nor, perhaps, do employers always

realise the peculiar difficulties to be faced. Young people, again, in the interval between leaving school and entering the service of firms such as these, are apt to let slip much that had been painfully taught them, and for this the school is often unfairly blamed. Yet there is still much justification for these criticisms, and they afford a very strong practical argument for further concentration on the teaching of English. It is of momentous interest to the future of education that the country as a whole should believe in the schools, and that teachers and employers should, so far as possible, see alike and pull together. Though the outlook in this direction is very encouraging,* teachers often have reason to complain that the demands of a short-sighted utilitarianism stand in the way of their ideals. But over the teaching of English, at any rate, utilitarian and idealist can join hands. Teachers will make no sacrifice of their ideals, or rather, they can only fulfil them, by endeavouring to meet the requirements implied in the above quotations. And they will be doing the greatest possible service to education if they can convince its critics that, so far, at any rate, as the position of English is concerned, their cause of complaint is disappearing.

78. Training in the art of writing is not simply a matter of doing set essays or formal compositions. Some of our witnesses shrink from requiring "Essays" at all from children of elementary school age, and Sir Stanley Leathes told us that, as a test in the use of English, "the Civil Service Commissioners do not consider that essays are suitable for boys and girls who come up for examination at about the age of 16." "'Essay,' fatal word!" says Mr. Hartog, and warns us against giving children a model "essay" by Lamb or Hazlitt, and "asking the infant to draw the bow of Ulysses." "Essay" and "Composition" are, indeed, imposing words, and to many they connote something beyond the children's powers. We do not wish to cheapen their significance. A complete composition is

* Compare Chapter V., §§ 134, 135.

something which calls for an exceptional effort ; it must not be degraded to a humdrum, everyday performance.

It is unfortunate, therefore, that " Composition " is the current time table designation for the periods allotted to practice in writing English. We are largely governed by words, and " Composition " to many teachers has no other meaning than " writing a composition." So, in many classes, it comes about that as often as the Composition time arrives, a subject is, as a matter of course, announced, and the children are required to write a full-dress composition on it. The teacher marks the mistakes, the children perhaps correct certain errors and re-write the words misspelt, and then set to work to write another composition. There is no adequate recognition of the intermediate steps by which this formidable task should be approached, or of the variety of exercises incidental to acquiring proficiency.

79. When Composition is taught in this routine fashion it is fatally easy to devote much time to it with little effect. Too often there is scarcely any real teaching, not from any deliberate neglect, but because the teacher has never thought out for himself any systematic way of dealing with it ; there is no method, no standard, no aim. What the children are, theoretically, at least, being asked to do—to realise, arrange and set forth their ideas, perhaps on some wide subject, and without previous discussion or preparation—is far too difficult for them. Naturally they make no serious effort to do it ; indeed, they may have only a vague notion of what it is that they are expected to do. And if the efforts of the teacher are limited to correction, they will never realise what they are expected to do. Teachers, as a rule, show themselves most painstaking in the correction of all the errors of punctuation, spelling and grammar. This is a tedious task, but a plain and straightforward one, and there is a danger that some of them may absorb all the available time in its performance and cherish the illusion that nothing more needs to be done. The correction of perhaps 50 or 60 exercise books is, indeed, a heavy burden, and if the children write as, strange to say, they sometimes

do, several "Compositions" in the week, it will take the teacher all his time merely to keep up with them. But correction must be tempered by methods that foster the creative impulse. Otherwise it becomes, as one of our witnesses calls it, "a slow but steady process of discouragement which, in the end, must subdue even the bravest spirit"; or, as Mr. Hartog put it in his evidence, "criticising bricks, not architecture." The teacher who limits his teaching to correction is asking for little, and he will get but little. He will seldom get a genuine attempt by the pupil to express as well as he can what he is really capable of thinking and saying. The pupil knows what will pass muster and does not offer more. His own past work becomes his model, and so, to the end, perhaps, of his school life, he may continue to serve up as composition what is as to the matter the mere froth of his mind, and as to the manner, painfully lacking in style and arrangement.

80. We do not suggest that the above description applies to more than a limited number of schools or classes. But when the teaching of composition fails, as it sometimes does, it fails for reasons of this kind. In such circumstances, a complete revolution is needed. Positive, not negative, methods are necessary; the pupil must be trying to express the substance of his thought, not merely to avoid mistakes in form. As Mr. Hartog said in an address to the Association of Preparatory Schools, "faults of spelling and punctuation are small things in comparison with the work in hand. You do not reproach a boy with lying and tell him that his hair is not straight at the same time." If some fluency has already been achieved, as will be the case if training in oral expression has been constantly kept up, then, it is true, an important part of the teacher's work will be to discipline fluency into form, producing clearness and some sense of construction. But until there is some fluency, highly critical methods will tend to repress the pupil into silence, and so defeat their own ends.

81. Positive methods, we have said, are needed, and about these our witnesses have made numerous suggestions.

We cannot give a full account of them, nor would they be new to most thoughtful teachers. But we select from our evidence the following "aids in the writing of English":—(*a*) continuous narration in lessons other than English, *e.g.*, History, Scripture; (*b*) interpretation work in reading or literature lessons, *e.g.*, the separation of involved passages into component sentences; (*c*) "summarising" in reading lessons or in preparation work; (*d*) direct and critical examination of suitable passages in books read; (*e*) listening to interesting and choice extracts read sympathetically; (*f*) the use of the dictionary—choice of words—alternative expressions; (*g*) proposals from the children about choice of subjects; class discussions, dramatic work; (*h*) preparation in advance of the subject matter of the composition, the older the pupil the longer the time allowed; (*j*) practice in simple descriptions, especially of common objects; (*k*) free and friendly criticisms by the scholars of each other's work.

All agree in emphasising the value of oral exercises. All call attention to the need for enlarging vocabulary, and for watching the extent to which the children prove able, in their own writing, to draw upon the vocabulary of the books they read. Mr. Hartog suggests that they should be asked to differentiate the meanings and uses of words of similar meaning, such as "comrade, friend, companion"; "work, labour, toil, drudgery." "Such exercises," he says, "stimulate the pupil to a sense of the beauty and rightness of great phrases and sayings, and they may do something to keep him from the danger of the catchword and every-day claptrap." He also urges that "we should free ourselves (*pace* Stevenson) from the idea of the *model*, and substitute for it the idea of the *problem*. The pupil should say something of his own, for a given audience and with a given object." This we think a suggestive point. The stimulus of a real purpose, *e.g.*, writing something for the school magazine, is bound to re-act helpfully. Several advise the writing of verse. One witness, *e.g.*, says: "Of all exercises in composition, original verse affords the best training. It is

interesting and natural to children. It makes boys examine their vocabulary and search for words. It obliges them to vary their construction. It reveals to them the first principle of style—that there are many ways of saying a thing; and one *best* way." An interesting monograph sent to us from the Board of Education for Newark, New Jersey, U.S.A., says: "The most practical way to teach anyone to write is to have him write numerous paragraphs. For the paragraph is really an essay in little, yet it contains almost every element contained in an essay in large, and it exemplifies almost all the principles of structure exemplified in an essay in large. In writing a good paragraph, as necessarily as in writing a good essay, one must choose, limit, and word his subject; gather, select, and mass his material; write, revise, and re-write his creation. Yet the paragraph, because of its small and convenient compass, may be written, abused, destroyed, and re-written; whereas the complacent bulk of a complete essay deters one from mutilating it, and frightens one from re-writing it."

82. In view of the significance which we attach to Composition, it may be asked how far it is desirable to entrust it to a specialist teacher. Up to a certain point, as we have already stated, every teacher is a teacher of Composition, in that he is helping to produce the habits of mind and the command of language which are required. All teachers would agree that knowledge, when acquired, should not be locked away in a separate compartment of the brain, but should be associated at once with other things known, other things thought, to form fresh ideas which will be given expression during an oral lesson or in written exercises. Whether or no a scheme of specialisation is adopted, the teachers of each subject must have regard to the quality of this expression. In the Elementary School, the class teacher generally takes every subject, though in recent years a certain amount of specialisation has been introduced, especially in the higher classes and in large urban schools. But it is often unsafe to leave Composition to the class teacher. To quote a very helpful memorandum from an Elementary School Head

Master: "There is most pressing need for direct instruction in the art of writing English. A carefully prepared and progressive course of exercises is needed, and this should be supplemented by other exercises devised by an appreciative teacher. I found that many of the temporary teachers were quite unable to devise such exercises. There is also need for frequent discussion of prose and verse passages, and here a teacher with a sound taste in literature is essential. I have found the lack of this in certain teachers reflected most decidedly in the composition of the pupils." Certainly, if any teacher has a special aptitude for teaching the art of writing, his powers should be utilised to the full.

83. Before we leave the subject of Composition, a few remarks on spelling are perhaps called for. The following extracts from our evidence represent, in the main, the opinions of our witnesses. "A boy who reads with avidity seldom spells badly . . . I do not feel that a thorough and persistent teacher will find spelling a serious difficulty." "As a result of doing plenty of reading, often between 11 and 14, a boy suddenly begins to spell well." "Fifty minutes' spelling and dictation have been recently put on the Time Table again in the upper classes, after being in abeyance for a year or so. It is a disciplinary subject, of value for concentration. Spelling does not constitute a serious difficulty, except in isolated cases." "The Juniors have one definite lesson ($\frac{1}{2}$ hour) weekly. The Seniors, in my opinion, learn to spell indirectly."

It is essential, of course, that children should learn to spell respectably. Most schools appear to reserve about half-an-hour a week for spelling lessons. But we do not think it necessary to recommend that this should be done, provided that the object can be attained. It is true that the business firms whom we have consulted frequently criticise severely the spelling of ex-elementary school pupils. But we do not think that, in the circumstances, the teaching of spelling in the Elementary Schools deserves to be singled out for stricture. It will always be so singled out, since mistakes in spelling are categorical things at which

the critic can securely point an indignant finger. Yet ability to spell a word is but one of several conditions of being able to use it properly. What is stigmatised as bad spelling is often, in its essence, sheer poverty of vocabulary. It is unreasonable to expect children to be able to spell words which are outside the range of their own vocabulary, nor, as often happens, should their first introduction to a new word be learning to spell it. Wider and more attentive reading, and perhaps even such indirect ways as spelling games, may often be more really effective than specific lessons.

Reading Aloud.

84. We are governed, we have said, largely by words, and "Reading," like "Composition," has acquired a special Time Table significance which puts a constraint upon the methods of teaching. "Reading," in the early days of elementary education meant securing a pass in the mere mechanical art of interpreting the symbols.* Attention was, therefore, concentrated on the mechanical side, so much so, that an inspector could write, a generation ago, "The great danger that besets the teaching of reading is that the English that is read may be to the children, and may be treated by the teacher, as a dead language." For nearly thirty years H.M. Inspectors each year heard each child read a passage aloud. It is another thirty years since the regulation requiring them to do so was cancelled, but the schools have never forgotten it. Though at 8 or 9 years of age the children should have mastered the mechanical difficulties, Reading continues, right up to the leaving age, to keep its place on the Time Table, and retains, as a rule, its time-honoured significance of "reading aloud." And yet, of all the aspects of the teaching of English, it is the reading aloud that our witnesses have criticised most severely.

85. It seems that, with many notable exceptions—for there are many schools in which it is a pleasure to hear it—reading aloud has tended to remain at the traditional "pass"

* Compare Chapter II., § 51.

level. This is not to be wondered at, for comparatively little has been done to raise it. A certain minimum capacity for speaking English clearly and correctly and for reading aloud has been required from most of the teachers, but a high standard in these respects has never been treated as a necessary part of their equipment.

There have undoubtedly been great improvements in recent years. Children will scarcely be heard to-day chanting out their reading in unison. There are plenty of schools in which the reading is most attractive. There is no reason why it should not be so in all. But there are still schools and classes in which the old tradition persists, and in which failure consequently occurs. Here the reading, like the composition, is a routine performance. Definite mistakes, mostly due to carelessness, are corrected, and the meanings of certain words are explained. But after achieving a certain degree of fluency the children get no further. It is not clear that they are aiming at anything they cannot already do.

86. Explicit rules for reading are not what is wanted. They are apt to lead to a stilted and artificial delivery. The essentials, in addition to speech-training, are that the children should understand and feel what they read, and that the teacher himself should be a good reader. From the very beginning, reading should be treated, not as a mechanical trick, but as a means of getting at ideas. An Infant School Head Mistress tells us : " Too many teachers fail to realise that reading is the recognition of the script equivalent of the spoken word. They fail to get their pupils to read for 'content.' Children should, from the beginning, realise that the writing is speaking to them silently." A good teacher of music gets his pupils away from notes at the earliest possible moment, and directs their attention to the phrase. Similarly, in reading aloud, so soon as sentences are reached, it is the phrase and not the word that should be the unit. The monotonous, expressionless way in which children even high up in the senior school sometimes read, is usually traceable to bad habits

acquired in the lower standards, or in the Infants' Class. They read each word separately, each in the same tone, as if it bore no relation to any other word in the sentence, ticking them off like beads on a string, and this exasperating trick often proves most difficult to eradicate. A very common source of bad reading is that the children have been pressed forward too fast on the purely mechanical side, and have been given difficult books too soon. If the phrase is beyond them, they revert to the word as the unit, and bad habits are started. With a difficult book the subject matter should be studied first, and reading aloud should follow, not precede, the comprehension by the pupil of the passage read.

87. Further, it ought to be unnecessary to insist that the teacher should be a good reader himself, capable of showing by his own example that reading is not a mechanical process, but a social and humane accomplishment, and a method of interpreting literature. Above all, he should be able to read poetry so as to reveal its beauty and to awaken poetic emotion.* Reading aloud by the teacher should be much more frequent than it is, and it is most important that children should be practised, not only in the art of speaking and reading, but also in the art of listening. Just as they are apt to read by words instead of phrases, so they are apt to listen for words and not for the sense. They should be trained to follow attentively the sense of what is read to them, and this remains true when the reading is for the purpose of dictation, which should be given to them in phrases, and not word by word.

Reading aloud will be greatly helped by dramatic work and by good teaching of Recitation. But in view of the associations which have gathered round the term "Reading," we suggest that when the mere technique, the recognition and use of the symbols, has been mastered, the lesson should be called "Literature" rather than Reading. Reading aloud will then fall into its proper place as an aspect of the study of literature. It will continue to be practised

* Compare Chapter VI., § 173.

throughout the school, though it is not so much the amount of time devoted to it as the standard set by the teacher that will determine its quality. Persistent bad readers should be grouped together as opportunity serves, and given special practice. They should not be allowed unduly to hold up the progress of the rest of the class.

The Use and Enjoyment of Books.

88. All our witnesses lay great stress on the importance of wide and varied reading. In this respect there has certainly been a great advance since the days when the child read and re-read his history, geography and general readers, but scarcely anything else all through the year. It is of the first importance that the children should be encouraged to form the reading habit. A child's desire to read ought never to be frustrated for want of books. If he has once become a reader of books worth reading, there need be no further anxiety about his education. All that is necessary is to give him opportunity. This is now widely realised. School, and even class, libraries are now common. School editions of books popular with children, and at the same time of literary merit, have been issued in great numbers by various publishers. Many local authorities, though not all, supply books on a generous scale, and some of them have adopted schemes for the circulation of books to the schools, and issued lists of books for the guidance of teachers.

89. The main objects of the literature lessons will be (i) increased command of the language, (ii) the acquisition of knowledge, (iii) appreciation and enjoyment of literature. These objects will, of course, overlap each other: some lessons will serve all three purposes. But one of them will, as a rule, be uppermost in the mind of the teacher.

(i) Where ease and accuracy in the use of language are the chief end in view, a detailed study should be made of individual passages of fine prose and verse. It is a good plan for each class always to have some book on hand

which they use for this purpose. One of our witnesses supplied us with a list of books so used, ranging from *Songs of Shakespeare* to *Alice in Wonderland.* A book of literary extracts is perhaps the most suitable. But the necessity for some intensive reading is very often overlooked. Many children never even discover the difference between complete comprehension of a passage and a vague impression of its general drift. Hence subsequent complaints from secondary school teachers and others. In this matter the schools should bear in mind Ruskin's exhortation :—" if you read ten pages of a good book, letter by letter—that is to say, with real accuracy—you are for evermore in some measure, an educated person."

(ii) Again, children are not, as a rule, sufficiently encouraged to address themselves to books for the purpose of obtaining information. This is no doubt connected, both as cause and effect, with what we have just been referring to, their lack of power to grasp fully what they read. Here the teacher's part will be to arouse interest, but not to satisfy it : that they must do for themselves. The experiments of the Parents' National Educational Union, whose methods, we are told, have been adopted in more than 100 schools, are widely known. The Head Master of one of these schools described to us his satisfaction with the results. Manuals and text-books are superseded by books of literary value, and the pupils are encouraged to get knowledge for themselves. It is also most desirable that children should learn to resort to books when they need information on particular topics, especially those connected with practical subjects, such as Gardening or Domestic Science. Few of them have much idea of making books yield them the particular knowledge they want, instead of reading them straight through. They should also learn to track down what they require in books of reference, such as Whitaker's Almanac, an encyclopædia, a dictionary, or an atlas.

(iii) Above all, the children should discover the delight of books. Here the great crux is the personality of the

teacher. People may be able to use books, may even be able to write lucid, correct English, without necessarily any real feeling for literature—as a delight, that is, in perfect expression. But if it is to be felt in this way, it must be entrusted to teachers with a love of it, and with a faith that children can love it too. We do not suggest that only the recognised English classics should be included. The lesson will be a failure if it is not really a recreation, and the teacher who means the effect of his work to be lasting will start from what the children themselves enjoy, recognising that even though what they read may be rubbish, their being willing to read at all is a definite asset. If he sets about it in the right way, he will soon be able to wean them from the merely mawkish or blood-curdling to read wholesome boys' and girls' books, simple ballads, and so onwards. But if he takes the line that to read trash is a moral offence, and if he coerces rather than persuades, he will be doing them a mischief in spite of his good intent. Certain of our witnesses, to whose lot it has fallen to teach literature to pupils who have passed through the elementary school, tell us that many of those pupils regard literature almost with hatred, and that this appears due to their school teaching. This may well be the result when literature is taught by the wrong person, one who substitutes for what the children like something which he does not care for himself, and which, consequently, he cannot help them to care for. His attitude is necessarily insincere, and the children will not fail to detect it. But our inquiries lead us to think that, when the circumstances of the elementary schools are taken into account, the extent to which they succeed in interesting their pupils in good literature is to-day one of their strongest points.

90. No doubt schools vary immensely in this respect. In some, literature is almost ignored, in others it is practically the mainspring of the work. However, in reply to our inquiry, "What books and authors have, in practice, proved most popular and valuable?" we have received a number of lists which afford admirable illustrations of the

civilising and humanising work of many schools. We note a striking catholicity of taste in lists of books read of their own choice by individual children. Shakespeare, Dickens, Tennyson, Kingsley, rub shoulders with to-day's boys' and girls' authors. We also note that children, like adults, demand contemporary literature. The old romance is retold, but not "exactly in the ancient way."

> Kingston, or Ballantyne the brave,
> Or Cooper of the wood and wave

yield pride of place to newer names. But what can be achieved by enthusiastic teachers is most impressive. A Head Mistress, who tells us that for 37 years she has encouraged girls to buy books for themselves, furnishes a list of those bought by girls at a particular school since 1917. "Tennyson, 150; Shakespeare, 540; Scott, 30; Pilgrim's Progress, 130; Fairy Tales, 50," etc.

Sometimes each pupil is allowed to read in class a book of his own selection, while the teacher, who needs a good knowledge of the contents of the school library, shares his interest so far as time and opportunity permit. Merely to distribute books is not enough; failing some interest shown by the teacher, many children will listlessly turn over the pages and prove to know little about a book which they profess to have read. Sometimes teacher and class go through a book together, and then special arrangements for the circulation of sets of books, such as that adopted by the London County Council and described to us by Mr. Palfery, are especially valuable.*

91. "The Class Mistress," says a witness from a girls' school, "nearly always makes the books she herself likes the most popular." The truth of this is illustrated by the varied status of the same author in different schools. "Dickens," says one witness, "does not appeal." "Scott," says another, "is not liked, and Dickens not generally, though an enthusiastic teacher can make the class respond." A third says: "Among the older boys I have found, beyond

* *See* Appendix III.

question, the favourite author is Dickens," and adds, "Possibly the fact that I am myself a devoted Dickensian has its influence." About Shakespeare, we are told: "The oldest boys have been interested in Shakespeare when a play was taken through by an appreciative teacher who dramatised certain scenes; but I question whether Shakespeare is not too difficult for an elementary school." Another witness remarks that, "as the elementary school is a finishing school, teachers feel that children ought not to grow up ignorant of Shakespeare and Scott." Teachers who find themselves unable to supplement this reason for including Shakespeare and Scott had best, perhaps, omit them. Their pupils may be likely to resemble a candidate in a recent examination, who wrote, "Scott has spent pages and pages upon describing a country scene, this is very uninteresting, but it is intensely good literature." But another witness tells us: "There is no doubt that the most popular author with the pupils is Shakespeare. A different play (or plays), one for each Form, is prescribed each term." We feel no call to dispute with those who tell us that Shakespeare is over the heads of the children. He is over the heads of us all. It is sufficient to say that in the schools Shakespeare proves an immense success.*

92. Few things are more encouraging, and, indeed, inspiring, than the enthusiasm for poetry kindled in numerous schools by teachers who love it. We have already quoted a passage from one of Matthew Arnold's often repeated appeals for the study of poetry by children.† "Some people," he has just previously said, "regard this very high estimate of the value of poetry in education with suspicion and displeasure. Perhaps they may accept the testimony of Wordsworth with less suspicion than mine. Wordsworth says: To be incapable of a feeling of poetry, in my sense of the word, is to be without love of

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* *See* §§ 286, 287, 289. † Chap. II., § 48.

human nature and reverence for God.'" Much is to be found to-day that would have gladdened Arnold's heart. The children who learnt their 100 or 200 lines, usually all from the same poem, and then only as an extra subject, have been succeeded by children who can recite a surprising number of separate poems, selected by themselves from their anthology, and have read and appreciated very many others; who compile and transcribe anthologies of their own, and delight in composing poems. The children, indeed, present no difficulty. They have a natural love for beauty of sound, for the picturesque, the concrete, the imaginative, that is to say, for poetry. The difficulty is rather with the teachers. All delight in poetry may be easily killed by ill-judged selection of pieces, undue insistence on perfect memorising, destructive explanations, and ill-concealed indifference, or even distaste. The teacher for whom poetry has no message should not attempt to take it with a class, unless, perhaps, he can catch from the children themselves some of the freshness of their feeling for a ballad or a play. But his loss will be great. There is no lesson like the poetry lesson for producing that intimacy between teacher and class which makes school a happy place.

II.—PREPARATORY SCHOOLS.

93. Most of what we have so far said applies to all boys and girls up to the age of 14. We wish most definitely to discourage the idea that there should be one way of English in schools of a certain type and another in schools of a different type. The way must be essentially the same in both; but it is trodden under conditions which differ so widely that we feel it necessary to devote a short space to the special problems presented by the private Preparatory Schools, more particularly those which prepare boys for the great Endowed Schools.

The pupils have, as a rule, much better home opportunities for learning English than elementary school pupils have. But until lately it has hardly been perceived that

definite school teaching is also needed. Thus, the Headmaster of Rugby told us that "the majority of preparatory schoolmasters did not realise that boys should be taught to read and write otherwise than incidentally." Accordingly, he said, a large proportion of boys entering the school proved "bad at English." This meant, he explained, that their English composition was clumsy and painful to the verge of illiteracy; they were unable to grasp a line of argument or assimilate or criticise the contents of a book, and they lacked imagination or had only very rudimentary powers of reasoning. Half of them had scarcely ever written essays, and the rest had written chiefly on subjects which did not appeal to them, and for which they had really no materials. In their reading they got up isolated points but failed to follow the connection of ideas.

Similarly, the representatives of the Science Masters' Association complained that their work was seriously hampered in the case of boys coming from the private Preparatory Schools at 14 years of age by the inability of the majority,

> (i) to describe familiar concrete objects in a reasonably adequate manner;
>
> (ii) to write a satisfactory account of their own actions and observations, after successfully performing simple experiments;
>
> (iii) to read English sentences with understanding, or at least with power to say exactly what they did not understand.

They considered that neglect of the mother-tongue led not only to the defects above mentioned but to inhibition of the general power of thinking between the ages of seven and fourteen years.

Another public school witness said that when boys came from Preparatory Schools it was necessary to begin their English over again. Their minds seem to have been overcrowded with subjects which were unpalatable. They had learned to hate literature, because no regard

had been shown to their individuality, in the choice or treatment of what they had been required to read.

94. The accounts we have received of the results of the teaching, or lack of teaching, of English in the Preparatory Schools have produced in us the impression that, except, perhaps, for the cleverest boys, the actual school work unduly represses the power of thought and self-expression, and has the inhibiting effect already mentioned. No doubt all kinds of interesting out-of-school activities, the games and the genial, kindly relations between masters and boys, limit this tendency and keep the modern school boy happy and keen, as it is natural for him to be, but this is in no way inconsistent with a certain warping and restricting of his mental growth. The segregation of small boys in boarding schools, and the consequent limiting of their world and restriction of their opportunities for talking with their elders may also, perhaps, tend to check the growth of their vocabulary and power of self-expression.

95. To points such as these many of the Preparatory Schools and Public Schools have long been alive. In 1910 a Committee of the Headmasters' Conference appointed to confer with Preparatory Schoolmasters issued their Report, which was reaffirmed, in essence, and developed, in the Report of the Joint Standing Committee of the Headmasters' Conference and Association of Preparatory Schools, dated 1916. This Report contains the following important paragraph: "Throughout the whole period of the Preparatory School we should emphasise the necessity for a thorough training in English, and the English papers should be made a substantial part of the Entrance Examinations of Public Schools, especially Entrance Scholarship Examinations; this training would help most effectively those who find the greatest difficulties with Latin, and no doubt we should thus do much to remedy the general neglect of the study of our language and literature, and the want of intelligence shown in the use of the mother tongue; it would serve, besides, as a valuable preliminary to the study of Science. We believe that the most serious

defect in the present curriculum is the neglect to which we have alluded, and that the removal of it is the first claim upon those who consider any scheme of studies." Even this Report, however, contains, with a list of books for English reading, a suggested time-table in which only $3\frac{1}{2}$ out of $32\frac{1}{2}$ hours are allotted to English, $9\frac{1}{2}$ to Latin, 5 to French, and $5\frac{1}{2}$ to Mathematics.

This Report of the Joint Committee, though adopted by the Headmasters' Conference in 1916, is not, of course, in any way binding on the Preparatory Schools, which are not subject, in theory, to any form of control. In practice, however, they are subject to a definite control, that of the public school entrance scholarship examinations. This, indeed, the Report affirms, stating that the entrance scholarship system, " in the opinion of most Preparatory Schoolmasters, determines indirectly the whole Preparatory School curriculum." and that " in a number of Preparatory Schools the education of the majority of the boys is sacrificed in order that the few may reach a high standard in those particular subjects which are of decisive importance in the awarding of scholarships at some Public Schools, and such specialisation the Committee regard as educationally harmful."

96. All this, at any rate, goes to show that it is now being realised that the teaching of English has in the past been unduly neglected. Many schools are now allotting increased time to it. At some of the Public Schools, for instance at Harrow, greatly increased importance has been assigned to English in entrance scholarship examinations. And in 1917 a paper on English Literature, in addition to the English Grammar paper, was introduced into the Common Entrance Examination. The Preparatory Schools gave it a mixed reception. Those who objected saw in it an interference with freedom, thought it would cause further congestion of the curriculum, or doubted its effects on the teaching of English.

It is obvious that where examination requirements exercise such power, English, unless it is included in those

requirements, will be practically eliminated from the school course. Ability to write and understand English can certainly be tested by examination, and such testing will have a favourable effect upon the teaching. We are also prepared to welcome the inclusion of English Literature, provided that room is really found for it, and that it is not merely squeezed into the present overcrowded curriculum. Unless it is read with enjoyment, it had better be left to fend for itself, and it cannot be read for enjoyment in an atmosphere in which " the education of the majority of the boys is sacrificed in order that a few may reach a high standard " in scholarship subjects. What will be the attitude towards literature of this " majority of the boys " if it appears upon their horizon only as an extra examination subject? Will it not often be resented or treated simply as a knowledge subject to be hastily got up in time for the examination? Merely to add a paper on Literature may thus conceivably do more harm than good. What is, in the first instance, wanted, seems to be a general relaxation of the examination grip and a relief from the present congestion of the curriculum.

97. The witnesses who represented the Preparatory Schools Association would let boys begin Latin at 9½ or 10, after having already done some French. Possible scholarship winners, they said, would begin Greek at 11. They thought that if Latin and Greek were postponed till later, the grammar grind was found more irritating, and that English was not difficult enough to give the hard mental training which was one of the advantages of a classical education. With regard to English composition, they did not think that much in the way of original ideas could be expected, or that much could be done towards training boys to write beyond pointing out their defects and showing them how they might have done better.

These witnesses did not claim to speak for more than themselves. But the whole question of the Public and Preparatory Schools' curriculum has been extensively discussed in the educational press, and particularly in the

Preparatory Schools Review, in which Headmasters of Preparatory Schools and others have argued these matters at length. One writer insists on the educational value of drudgery. Another maintains that it is natural for a boy, even an English boy, to delight in mental work and the acquisition of knowledge. The effect on boys' minds of the early study of Latin is very keenly disputed.

98. Our view of the best way of making more room for English is not one which we are the first to state. It is anticipated by the Schools Inquiry Commission, who said in 1867 : " If boys were not allowed to begin Latin till the elements of an English education were thoroughly secured; for instance, till they were capable of passing the highest standard of the Committee of Council on Education; if it were then kept within such limits as not to encroach on other subjects, but give them aid, it would probably have its full educational value at the time, and prepare the way for a higher grade of education afterwards, if a higher grade were intended." It is also expressed in the Report of the Modern Language Committee, which says : " We are inclined to believe that the average pupil is not ready to begin the first language at school much before the age of 12," * and " It is in our opinion a mistake to attempt to teach two languages to the majority of boys before they are 13." †

Such a lifting of the burden of foreign languages would render easier the provision of that basis of English teaching on which, as we have already said, we consider that any liberal education must be built. Among the reasons for which we advocate it are the following :—

99. The knowledge of what is common to all languages, the elements of grammar, and the structure of sentences, should be acquired through English before another language is attempted.‡ This we believe is now generally admitted.

The premature introduction of such subjects as Latin and Mathematics not only encroaches on the time needed for English, but has a definitely injurious effect on

* § 120. † § 127. ‡ *See* §§ 264, 265, 266.

the mind. We wholly dissent from the theory that in order properly to discipline a boy's mind it is desirable or right to cut across the line of development which his nature marks out for itself and put him to the study of difficult subjects, the rationale of which is quite beyond his ken. The right way to educate him seems to us to be to take advantage of that lively interest in everything around him which he shows as a child, and to provide conditions in which his ideas and his powers of self-expression may grow apace and abreast of each other. Everything is new to him, and his mind is busy interpreting it to himself, chiefly in terms of romance. The creative and imaginative impulse within him finds scope in various ways ; so far as English is concerned, chiefly in writing poems and plays. But athwart his path suddenly comes the 9½ hours (or perhaps longer) discipline of the elements of the Classics, and it will be years before he will be able to see what lies beyond; possibly he will never see it. He may appear to like it at first, and this has been used as an argument by those who favour beginning Latin at 9. It is something new, and he invests it at first with some of the romance with which he has been accustomed to welcome everything. But it is not long before he is disillusioned, and he goes through his grind, and learns, perhaps, to remember certain rules and to apply them, to work and think diligently in a field wholly removed from his own ideas and interests, but not to regard clear and accurate expression of those ideas and interests as a matter of importance to himself or to others.

100. It will greatly assist the study of the Classics and help towards its being undertaken in the right spirit if some perception of what literature is, and some sharpening of the critical faculties, have first been acquired through the reading of English. We would let children surmount first in their own language many of the difficulties presented by all great literature, so that when they come, later on, to Horace or Sophocles, they may no longer have the two difficulties to confront at once, the difficulty of the unknown

art of poetry, as well as the difficulty of an unknown language.

If it is a discipline that is demanded, the study of English will afford one, different from that of the Classics, yet thoroughly effective. No doubt the discipline of Latin is more uncompromising. The construction of each sentence must be made out, the form of each word must be accounted for. In English it is mitigated by familiarity with the language and greater possibility of interest in the subject matter. But a specifically linguistic and literary training can be obtained from English. For the school boy, at least, the discipline of English goes further, in some ways, than that of Latin. He can distinguish shades of meaning in English which would be beyond him in Latin. Again, the unit, which in Latin is the sentence, becomes in English the whole chapter or the whole book. The rapidity with which he can read in English enables him, if he reads with disciplined attention, to comprehend a book as a whole, to feel the full force of a story or play or poem, which could only reach him piecemeal in a classical author. It has sometimes been claimed that he learns English best through the study of Latin, especially through the careful consideration to which he has to subject every word and phrase in a passage in English before translating it into Latin. But can he not exercise his wits upon it after the manner of *la lecture expliquée*,* *i.e.*, by taking the sentence to pieces without the ulterior purpose of making a translation, on which the French teachers of the mother-tongue set great store?

101. Most teachers assume, we think, that there is no discipline to be got from English merely because they have never troubled to look for it. They have found their means of discipline in the Classics; why should they seek it elsewhere? The very teacher who waxes indignant over a faulty construction in Latin may treat an equally faulty construction in English as a very venial offence. A schoolmaster, writing in defence of English, says that the boys

* *See* Appendix II.

find the hours devoted to the English subjects an agreeable relaxation after the rigours of the Classics. That is as it should be. But it must not be implied that agreeable relaxation is all that the study of English can afford. Others have looked to find in English just the same discipline that the Classics provide; and failing, have condemned English instead of themselves. This is what the Report of the Joint Committee appears to have in mind in saying "there will be considerable danger of its (the study of English) being quite ineffective, partly through vagueness, partly through exhausting, after a term or two, the resources of the subject; we have to remember that a very large number of teachers were brought up on a curriculum which practically ignored the subject altogether." Classics have been taught for centuries, and the methods of teaching Classics have been thoroughly thought out. The methods of teaching English have yet to be explored. But the teacher who models his teaching of English on the lines of the teaching of the Classics, and whose mind runs mainly on translating, parsing, points of syntax and critical notes, will soon find himself at the end, not of his subject's resources, but of his own.

We have never contemplated saying that English could replace the Classics. Such an expression would show the crudest misconception of the place both of the Classics and of English in the national life. But instead of the study of the Classics being forced on all indiscriminately, we would use English as a sifting ground, to differentiate those who possess linguistic ability and literary instincts, and are likely to make sufficient progress with Latin, or Greek, or both, to justify their taking them up.

102. In any event, it is for the Preparatory Schools to remove all excuse for such reproaches against the efficiency of their English teaching as we have already referred to. And we look for a fresh bias to be given to the influence of the public schools scholarship examinations. They should cease to encourage specialisation in other subjects to the detriment of English as it comes to be

recognised that English is the one subject in which early specialisation is educationally sound, and that a boy who has been well grounded in his mother tongue is likely to derive quite as much benefit from the subsequent study of the Classics, and perhaps to distinguish himself as much in them, as one who has concentrated upon them from the earliest age possible. And in the Common Entrance Examination it should be recognised that " badness in English " is a more serious matter, and should militate more against success than badness in anything else.

103. In the Preparatory Schools the dialect difficulty seldom requires to be dealt with, but indistinct pronunciation, due to lip-laziness, and clipping and slurring of words and syllables. is by no means peculiar to children of any one class, and needs to be eradicated by phonetic training. And since English, as the basis of education, is destined to carry a heavier superstructure in the Preparatory than in the Elementary School, its scientific treatment there must be the more strongly insisted on. Phonetic training in English becomes of additional value when the study of a modern foreign language is to follow, since, before a child can be expected to recognise and produce the sounds of another language, he must be able to appreciate those of his own. And the opinion expressed by the majority of the Modern Language Committee, that the correct pronunciation of a foreign language can best be taught in schools not by beginning it at the earliest possible age and depending on imitation, but by methodical training of ear and of organs of speech, emphasises further the importance of early scientific teaching of the sounds of spoken English.

CHAPTER IV.

SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

104. The term "Secondary School" includes schools of very varied type, and it is not easy to classify them in any satisfactory way. One obvious line of division is that between the schools which are conducted under the Grant Regulations of the Board of Education and those which are not. The former, by far the larger group, and now approaching 1,000 in number, includes the County and Municipal Schools provided by the Local Education Authorities, most of the old Grammar Schools, and the schools of the Girls' Public Day School Trust. The latter group consists of the more important Endowed Schools, including the great Public Schools, and a large number of schools of a denominational character, and the various proprietary and private schools.

The grant-aided schools have all a real connection, in differing degrees, with the Public Elementary Schools. The County and Municipal Secondary Schools have come into existence partly in order to provide secondary education for selected elementary school scholars, and have never lost sight of the actual requirements of these scholars, and the Grammar Schools now included in this group of grant-earning schools have had their ancient character profoundly modified. All the schools in the grant-earning group are required to satisfy the Board of Education that they provide instruction in the English language and literature, and to submit their time-table for inspection. The other schools, too, have undergone great changes since the Report of the Schools Inquiry Commission and the Report of the Royal Commission on Secondary Education in 1895, and are at the present time very receptive of new ideas.

Boys' Secondary Schools.

105. Another line of division, which is specially important in our consideration of the Teaching of English, is

that between boys' and girls' Secondary Schools. In the boys' schools belonging to both groups spoken of above, the conditions were, almost till the end of the nineteenth century, unfavourable to the study of the mother tongue. But the causes of this were quite different in the two groups. In the smaller, but more powerful, group that included the great Public Schools and the Grammar Schools with a similar curriculum, the tradition of classical culture was so firmly rooted that English was not seriously considered as an educational subject. And even when, under the pressure of new forces and ideas, the curriculum began slowly to be widened, it was not English that at first was benefited. When "modern sides" were introduced into some of the Public Schools, science, and afterwards foreign languages, were the chief subjects, and it was not realised that a training in English was essential to proficiency in both branches; still less, perhaps, that the modern-side boy had equally with his classical-side brother a need for, and a right to, the spiritual elements in education that literature could give. For reasons that we have attempted to trace in Chapter II. of this Report, the ghost of a sadly debilitated humanism brooded over this group of schools, the shadow of her former self, yet jealous

> Of such as, wandering near her secret bower,
> Molest her ancient solitary reign.

And, so far as these schools sought to give vocational education for the professions, they saw no profit in English. Greek would enable a clergyman to read the New Testament in the original, Latin would qualify a barrister to study Roman law, or a doctor to write his prescriptions; Mathematics was essential to the soldier, sailor, or engineer. But for English there seemed no call.

In the group of smaller and newer schools where the classical tradition did not hold sway, the balance had been weighted against English by the grants from the Science and Art Department for the teaching of Science, and by so-called "whiskey-money" allocated under the Local Taxation Act of 1890. Hence an undue bias was

administratively given towards a predominantly technical and utilitarian curriculum. A new era was inaugurated by the Education Acts of 1902 and 1903. They legalised financial aid to literary and linguistic as well as scientific subjects. It became necessary for the schools to plan a curriculum as an organic whole, and in this it was realised that English must be an essential part. Moreover, the introduction into the Secondary Schools of large numbers of scholarship holders from Elementary Schools, with very little humanistic background, made it imperative that there should be ample provision for the teaching of English, which was the chief basis of their culture. Hence the Acts of 1902 and 1903 have had, as is so often the case, unexpected reactions, and have in practice promoted the study of English in Secondary Schools, though this was not one of their direct objects.

Girls' Secondary Schools.

106. When we turn to girls' schools we find that there has been a marked difference in the position of English, and this is probably to be traced to a difference of ideal in the education of the two sexes. Before the struggle of the "sixties" and "seventies" for the higher education of women, a girl's outlook had been solely directed towards home duties; the idea of fitting her for any other kind of life was unthought of; if she had to earn her living, so much the worse for her; she was rarely helped to earn it adequately and self-respectingly by any training. Consequently, as English was a subject which could be taught, "in a way," even by those who had not studied it, it naturally occupied a large part of the curriculum of a girls' school. This enforced recognition of English had its beneficial side. English was never in girls' schools the "Cinderella" among subjects, starved out by the classical tradition which for long monopolised nearly all the time of boys, and all the best brains among men-teachers, but on the other hand so badly was it taught that an unscholarly

view of the study of English was created, which it has been extremely difficult to dislodge. While in boys' schools the study of English was almost entirely neglected, in girls' schools it was ill-treated. Miss Emily Davies, one of the pioneers of reform in the education of girls, writing in 1864, remarks: "Of Literature, women of the middle class know next to nothing—I speak of general literature, and of ordinary women, whose reading for the most part is confined to novels and novels not of the best—Newspapers are scarcely supposed to be read by women at all. When the 'Times' is offered to a lady, the sheet containing the advertisements and the Births, Deaths and Marriages, is considerately selected." Miss Davies goes on to state, in her own way, in another passage written in 1864, the firm belief which underlies our Report of 1921. "The want of hearty sympathy, not only between the classes which are divided by broad and easily recognised distinctions, but also between those which are separated by lines so shadowy that looked at from above or below, they are scarcely discernible, is one of the most serious impediments to social progress, and it is one which a better and more widely diffused culture might do much to remove." The miserable condition of the teaching (including the teaching of English) in girls' schools, which produced this mental lethargy in many of the women of the mid-Victorian age, is proved by numerous passages in the Report of the Schools Inquiry Commission dated 1867. In Vol. I. we read: "The general deficiency in girls' education is stated with the utmost confidence, and with entire agreement, with whatever difference of words, by many witnesses of authority. Want of thoroughness and foundation; want of system; slovenliness and showy superficiality ——," and in Vol. VIII.: "A cultivated young lady would read and write well, would be faultless in her spelling." In addition, "she would possess a facility of expression and composition in her own language, greater than that possessed by most men of her class of life; and lastly, some knowledge, acquired chiefly at second-hand, of standard English authors . . But the study of solid

and weighty writers, and the discussion of matters of first-rate importance, would be uninteresting to her, owing to her lack of real comprehensive knowledge, and consequently of speculative power. Or, if she attempted to interest herself in such matters, the want of trained judgment and the imperfect development of her critical and reasoning faculties would oblige her to rely with blind credulity upon the dogmatic assertions of those about her."

If this was the general standard of the education provided for girls in the "sixties," it is hardly surprising to find that an opponent of women's education writes scoffingly, in 1863, that if girls should attempt to study the subjects required for the ordinary undergraduates of London University, "we might get one or two clever young women, several Miss Cornelia Blimbers, and many Miss Tootses"—but, he continues, "I believe we should have half the young women in the country in brain fever or in a lunatic asylum, if they were to make up their minds to try for it."

107. The above passages have been quoted in order to show what have been the special difficulties in regard to English teaching with which girls' schools have had to cope:—unscholarliness, superficiality, second-hand knowledge, and, above all, an age-long tradition, obliging the girl to subdue her critical and reasoning faculties and "to rely with blind credulity upon the dogmatic assertions of those about her." These are difficulties with which boys' schools have not been confronted, and although immense strides have been made by girls in the last 50 years in the direction of independent judgment, we conclude from the evidence of several of our witnesses that the evil has not wholly disappeared, and that, especially among girls who leave school before the age of 18, there is, at times, a tendency to mental docility, which amounts in some cases, we fear, to mental dishonesty. We feel, however, bound to state quite definitely that the danger is recognised and that the steps taken to guard against it are proving effective.

On the other hand, girls' schools have been in some respects favourably placed in regard to the study of English. First, as we have said above, when the educational system for girls was developed, English already had its position, even a prominent position, in the curriculum. Secondly, as soon as it had the chance of being taken seriously, it could go forward as a live thing, for it was untrammelled by the classical tradition of close textual study which made experiments in method in boys' schools almost an impossibility. Thirdly, it gained immeasurably from the fact that the sister arts—music, and drawing or painting—had already a position in the educational system of girls. The power of æsthetic appreciation, which was traditionally fostered in girls, was, and perhaps still is, to a considerable extent, the great compensation for the lack of that scholarly habit which was with equal fervour traditionally fostered in boys.

It may, therefore, be contended that, while the inefficiency of much of the teaching must be admitted, the study of English has had opportunity to make more headway among the rank and file of girls than of boys, and this opportunity has produced its inevitable results. Headmistresses gave time to, and showed keen interest in, English work from the lowest forms in the school upwards. They appointed the best teachers they could get. A large number of girls in the upper part of the school were inspired with the love of literature and with the wish to carry their studies further; many of the ablest among them entered the Honours Schools at the Universities, worked with enthusiasm, and, in spite of the frequent lack of classical background, became real scholars. Many of these entered the teaching profession and helped to establish the position of English in girls' Secondary Schools.

Progress in the Secondary Schools.

108. The last 30 years have witnessed great improvements in the teaching of English in the majority of Secon-

dary Schools—improvements that are often ignored in current criticism. Writers in the press are apt to assume that school lessons in literature are confined to the study of elaborately annotated texts of Shakespeare, and that school essays chiefly revolve upon vague and abstract themes like Patriotism and Moral Courage, with occasional but doubtful relief in the form of an essay on Football. That this state of things can still be found here and there it would be rash to deny, but it is no longer general. In Composition the range of subjects has been enormously widened. Much has been learnt, though, doubtless, more is still to be learnt, from the observation of French methods and their adaptation to English conditions.* Exercises in both descriptive and imaginative writing, as well as practice in verse composition, in letter writing, and in dialogue, are common in the early stages. Many interesting experiments, such as those described to us by Mr. Caldwell Cook (Perse School), Mr. Sharwood Smith (Newbury School), Mr. Gerald Dowse (Liverpool Collegiate School), and Mr. G. N. Pocock (Royal Naval College, Dartmouth), have been tried with a view to encouraging self-expression. These include debates, improvised dialogues and dramatic scenes, and ten-minute lectures by pupils, in class as well as in out-of-school hours. Some schools possess a room where the absence of desks and the presence of a stage facilitate the production of drama, and where well chosen pictures on the walls give an environment favourable to literary art. As in the Elementary School, there is a far wider range of reading than formerly, together with sounder discrimination in the choice of authors to be read at successive stages. Rapid and enjoyable reading is no longer an exceptional thing; the class themselves take more part in the lesson and express their likes and dislikes freely. Many prizes for English prose and verse composition have been founded in the schools, and prizes for English essays are offered by the Royal

* Some of the French methods were described to us by Dr. Robert L. Cru and by Mr. P. J. Hartog.

Asiatic Society, the Navy League, and other public bodies, in open competitions. School magazines have multiplied, and if some of them are mainly athletic chronicles, others encourage literary ambitions in a way that recalls the "Microcosm" of Canning and his contemporaries at Eton. Many other institutions in the schools help to foster an interest in English literature; better and more numerous school libraries, dramatic clubs, reading circles, debating societies, visits to public libraries and to the theatre. The increase in the number of boys and girls who enjoy a secondary school education, and the gradual extension of the school age in the newer Secondary Schools, mean that every year more young people are being initiated into the great English writers, and that they are carrying their studies further. The weight attached to English in the School Certificate or First Public Examination, now commonly taken at the age of 16 or 16½, has favourably affected its position in many schools. Where that examination is taken, English is at least raised to the dignity of a subject, one of five or six studied by boys and girls up to this age. Another forward step of first-rate importance has been the recognition by the Board of Education of Advanced Courses in Modern Studies, in which English may be taken as a main subject. The Board's Inspectors, and officials of Local Authorities, have helped in the improvement of methods by their own suggestions and by instituting holiday courses in which teachers can discuss with experienced lecturers the difficulties they have encountered in their work. Many teachers of both sexes are interested and active members of the English Association, founded in 1907, which, with its numerous branches, meetings, and pamphlets, has done much to develop the teaching of the English language and literature upon sound lines, and to improve the public examinations, which exercise so potent an influence upon the schools. However much yet remains to be done, there is cheering evidence of a living interest in English in the schools, and of the existence of teachers who are making full use of their opportunities.

109. Yet the position of English in the Secondary Schools is still far from satisfactory in respect of the actual time allotted, of methods, and of results. In regard to time, comparison between schools is difficult, because some of those of which we made inquiry included the time given to Scripture, History and Geography in their returns. But it would appear that the time given specifically to English varies from one to five or six teaching periods in the week. One great school, at least, gives no time at all to English definitely, relying wholly on "stimulus and tradition" to foster a love of English literature, often with conspicuous success. On the classical sides of Public Schools one hour a week is probably an average allowance. But in several Public Schools the time allotted has been considerably increased of late, and approaches the proportion commoner in other secondary boys' schools and in girls' schools. In regard to methods and results, probably the greatest obstacle to improvement hitherto has been the absence of a good tradition in the teaching of English, with a consequent lack of definiteness of aim and scepticism as to the possibility of progress. There is something pathetic about the acceptance by boys and masters in the great Public Schools of a low standard of English as if it were inevitable. "To be bad at English," the Headmaster of Rugby told us, "seemed to be regarded by both masters and boys as a natural defect." But he himself believes with us that this failure in English, and the lack of imagination which is mainly responsible for it, are curable by better methods, especially by training boys to observe the connection of ideas in what they read, instead of trying to remember disconnected facts. The fundamental importance of English as something more than a subject is certainly not fully appreciated by the schools. A ready assent is, indeed, given to the formula that English is the concern of every teacher. Yet it is clear that in some cases what is everybody's concern proves in practice to be nobody's, and that in some schools the situation is only saved, so far as it is saved at all, by the presence on the staff of some

one enthusiast for English literature, with a gift for stimulating those who pass through his form.

110. A clearer recognition of the true relation of English to other studies, and of the aims to be kept in view, seems to us more important than any change in the apportionment of hours in a time-table. If the claim we have made for English in the earlier stages be conceded, the pupils of secondary school age will be better prepared, and the battle will already be half-won. But in the Secondary School time might be saved in the study both of Classics and of modern languages, including English, by the adoption of a uniform grammatical terminology in laying a sound foundation of grammar. In this matter we accord our support to the recommendations of the Joint Committee on the Reform of Grammatical Terminology, representatives of whom gave evidence before us.* Again, the time needed to be set apart for English composition could be greatly reduced if teachers of history and science exacted a higher standard of English in oral and written work than that which at present they often accept; nor need English composition always be a thing separate from the written work in a special subject, such as history, geography, or science. Once more, where the teachers of languages, ancient or modern, have a literary and not merely a linguistic interest, fewer definite lessons in English are needed, because every lesson in translation becomes at once a lesson in English, and a lesson in the comparative study of literature. Such a character has belonged to the most stimulating language lessons in the past, though it cannot be said to have been common. But above all, a realisation of what might be accomplished through English literature to "awaken the mind from the lethargy of custom and direct it to the loveliness and the wonders of the world before us"—the world of Nature and of Man—would, if it became general among teachers, transform the face of our schools.

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* *See* Appendix IV.

Junior Departments.

111. Many Secondary Schools, both of the older and newer types, possess Preparatory and Junior Departments for the younger pupils. Probably it is in some of these that the teaching of English in its earlier stages is most successfully handled, though it must always be remembered that success depends on the genius of the teacher who controls the work far more than on the type of school, the nature of the curriculum, or the time allotted. But although these Departments have, as a rule, less time to devote to English, they have certain advantages over the Elementary Schools: in the home conditions of the children, the size of the classes, the quality of the staff and the employment of specialist teachers, opportunities for using a library, and the existence of various school clubs and societies. Over the schools preparing for the great Public Schools, they have this advantage: they form a coherent part of a single school, and in consequence enjoy greater freedom and less division of aim. They are not subject to the demands, often conflicting, of a number of external examinations. Also the curriculum is generally less overcrowded. French is probably begun early, but a second language, usually Latin, is not as a rule, taken till the age of 11 or 12.

In some of these Departments highly interesting developments in the teaching of English are taking place. The account which we have received from Christ's Hospital of the recently adopted curriculum shows that in the Preparatory School from 7 to 11 periods are given to English, and a foreign language (French) is not begun till a boy enters the Junior School at 12 or 13. Here he still devotes eight periods to English, including History. He does not begin a second foreign language (Latin or German) till he reaches the middle school, at about 14. One of the reasons given for the reconstruction of the curriculum is that "there is pressing need to make a far larger provision throughout the school for English studies up to the age of 15."

At the Perse School, Cambridge, Latin is not begun till 12½ or 13, and Greek not till about 16. In the Lower Forms, accordingly, it is possible to give special attention to English Literature and Composition. Creative work in the form of lectures by the boys, the writing of verse, and the writing and acting of plays, is a great feature in this school.

In these Preparatory Departments the amount of time given to English during the week is generally from eight to four periods of 40 minutes, varying according to the age of the children concerned, and, in addition, one to two hours are assigned to preparation. In order to do only what is absolutely essential, we think that up to the age of 12, at least, one period a day should be devoted to English. English at this stage should include grammar and phonetics.* Time should be found for phonetics in the many schools that do not yet attempt this subject, though in the girls' schools, speech training generally based on a study of phonetics is now not uncommon. In one school, for instance, eight weekly periods given to English by girls from 10½ to 11½ include two lessons in phonetics and diction.

The period from 11 to 14 will, of course, be spent by the majority of English children at an Elementary School. The boy destined for a Public School will also remain at his Preparatory School till 13 or 14. But for most Secondary School pupils the break, when there is a break, comes at the age of 11, as that is the age at which pupils from Elementary or from Private Schools enter.

When the two or three years previous to the age of 14 are spent in a Secondary School, it is, of course, most important that the opportunity should be taken of repairing, before it is too late, any deficiencies in English teaching from which the pupils may previously have suffered; and during the first year or so, while classes formed of pupils from schools of several types are being welded together, special attention should be given to the teaching of English. But

* *See* § 264.

competition for an increased proportion of time soon sets in between the various subjects, and there is often a danger that reading and composition may be comparatively neglected. In some Secondary Schools, even though the children may come from uncultivated homes, and their speech be much influenced by undesirable provincialisms, the time devoted to English is reduced in the Middle School to three periods a week. This is quite insufficient and results in a lop-sided education. Unless the foundation in English be well laid, it is a waste of time to attempt to superimpose the other parts of a liberal education upon it.

Age 14 to 16.

112. We pass on to consider the period from 14 to 16, at which time the First Public Examination (the "School Certificate," or its equivalent) is commonly taken. The evidence we have received corroborates the suitability of the general scheme laid down by the English Association for pupils of this age and for more advanced pupils.*

Not a few of our witnesses laid stress on the special difficulties attending this stage. Thus, a representative of the Science Masters' Association told us that his impression of boys entering a Public School at 14 was that," apart from the 10 per cent. highest and the 10 per cent. lowest, the intervening 80 per cent. were quite dull, apathetic, and not interested. Yet up to the age of seven, when they began to go to school, their minds had been alive and alert, they had taken an absorbing interest in everything around them, had been eager to learn and to express themselves, and without any teaching whatever they had made the most astonishing mental progress." For this change one witness laid the blame upon the methods of the Preparatory Schools, and another upon the social inhibitions of the Public School strongly repressing the individuality of boys from the moment of their entrance, whilst others regarded the stage as inevitable in the life of the adolescent. The

* *The Essentials of English Teaching* (Longmans, Green & Co.).

causes are not purely external, and they do not affect one type of school or one sex alone. But it seems clear that the dulness and apathy complained of can be reduced considerably by sympathetic treatment and a wise choice of methods and of authors to be read. The Instructor in English at the Royal Naval College, Dartmouth, told us that "most boys came hating 'English,' but learnt soon to love it." His methods of dealing with this problem are given in detail in Chapter V., § 149.

113. The written work may take various forms, some of them much simpler, but not less stimulating, than the set essay: *e.g.*, practice in giving a clear and concise direction, or in writing an account of an everyday occurrence, or describing a concrete object. The reproduction, sometimes in full, sometimes on a reduced scale, of a well-chosen passage of prose read aloud to the class may be used to call attention to the virtues of a model of style, to enlarge the vocabulary, to teach construction and arrangement. Imaginative subjects, too long neglected, are to-day sometimes used to excess. When they evoke any real imagination, they are more than justified; but the tendency to choose a subject which makes no demand upon the reasoning powers must be restrained. A long and complicated argument is indeed quite beyond the young writer at this stage. But he may profitably be invited to build a short paragraph round some single thought with the same care and concentration that would be required for a piece of Latin prose. In this way clearness and exactitude of expression may be learnt, when the effort to spin out a lengthy theme might only result in aimless meanderings and weary repetitions and circumlocutions.

114. Some of our witnesses set great store by the composition of original verse as an aid in the study of English composition and literature. Where boys and girls are ready to write in verse, nothing but good can come of their spontaneous efforts. It is clear, too, that some teachers can best impart the sense of form and of the value of words by this method. But verse-writing can

only be a special tool in the hands of a limited number of teachers, and the danger is great that principles of prosody, only half understood, or perhaps entirely erroneous, may be enforced in such a manner as to reduce the lesson to a mere mechanical drill.

115. Not less important than the art of writing is the art of speaking, which includes practice not only in framing questions and answers, but also in reading aloud, recitation, debating and drama. Many of our witnesses agree that the power to read audibly and intelligibly is distressingly rare, and we have made suggestions upon this point elsewhere in this Report,* but there is no consensus of opinion as to the best method of raising the general standard. The art of reading aloud cannot be imposed by one person on another—by the teacher on the child; it must come from within, from a real understanding and appreciation of the passage read; but it can be strengthened by frequent exercise. Artificiality is to be avoided, but so, too, is slovenliness, whether in articulation or in emphasis. A reasonable study of phonetics by the teacher should enable him to give guidance and to correct some of the most common and jarring mistakes of pronunciation.

116. Lack of continuity has been an element of weakness in the English teaching of the past; and nowhere has this been exemplified more than in the choice of pieces for learning by heart. Whilst the classical sixth form master generally has some idea what passages from Virgil and Horace will have been learnt by his pupils at earlier stages, in English the choice of poems is too often made from term to term without any coherent plan. We approve the principle laid down by the Secondary School Inspectors of the Board of Education, in a memorandum which they drew up for our use, that the passages learnt by heart should be divided into two classes. The first class should be pieces selected by the teacher to be learnt by all pupils, revised systematically, so as to become a permanent possession: "there should thus grow up in

* *See* § 298.

the mind of the pupil a body of fine poetry, of value not only for its own sake, but for its uses for comparison and illustration through the later work." Secondly, "there may well be room for a number of passages, the choice of which is left to the pupils." Before a piece is committed to memory it should be studied in class, that the maximum of advantage may be derived from it and that uneconomical methods of learning may be avoided. Rhythm and metre can most easily be taught in connection with the repetition. But the passages learnt should not all be in verse: through repetition the pupil's ear may best be familiarised with the rhythm of fine prose, till he insensibly comes to modulate his own writing harmoniously.

117. When we remember that this period is for many English boys and girls at present the concluding period of their school life, the importance of the lessons in literature becomes manifest. Whether they are to turn in after-years for enjoyment and for profit to their great national heritage of prose and poetry will probably depend on the impression of it which they carry away from school. The Secondary School Inspectors, in the memorandum from which we have already quoted, have some wise counsel to offer to the teacher as to the choice of books and methods, and we cannot do better than adopt their words:—

"No fixed rule of treatment should be followed. Variety of treatment is an advantage and a stimulus, but serious study should be kept quite distinct from rapid reading, though the same book may well afford material for both. To harp on the same method lesson after lesson, to read in class minute fragments of a whole which the class may well be relied on to read for themselves without assistance and at their leisure, to work in successive terms at one and the same book—all these make staleness in class and teacher inevitable.

"All good methods have this in common, that they aim at focussing attention on the living word of the author. . . .

"It is unfortunately true that methods of teaching English are so far little developed. They have been far less thought out than the methods of teaching some other subjects, *e.g.*, a foreign language. English teaching, which, in fact, demands endless skill and resource, is too often thought a task which any teacher can perform. The chief and outstanding fault in the teaching at this stage is a lack of resource with a consequent adherence to some restricted method—which may be good in itself as one among many devices—until both teacher and class become stale and the work loses life. . . .

"Probably the most fruitful cause of waste of time in this subject is unskilful correction of written work. Failing to distinguish between what may usefully be corrected and what for the moment may wisely be overlooked, the teacher tries to correct everything. There is no perspective as to what is important or unimportant. The cardinal fact is disregarded that the span of the pupil's mind, so far as correction is concerned, is a narrow one, and that, if faults are to be eradicated, they must be taken seriatim. . . .

"The syllabuses of work show a great improvement on the syllabuses of fifteen or even ten years ago, particularly in the range of texts read. The position is not, however, wholly satisfactory, if it may be accepted that in all schools during the year, and in most schools in each term, the texts read should include drama, poetry other than drama, and prose other than a novel. A sufficient place is usually given to drama and lyrical verse, but the importance of the study of good prose other than a novel is frequently overlooked. . . .

"In the reading of texts in class perhaps the difficulties least often surmounted by the teacher are the exercise of judgment in explaining a passage and testing suitably and adequately the pupil's understanding of what he has read."

118. A large number of the pupils in the Municipal and other Secondary Schools do not remain beyond the

age of 16. On the other hand, the premium which the Education Act of 1918 puts on full-time instruction up to 16 will doubtless lead to a great increase in the number whose attendance at a Secondary School is continued to that age. The Act provides that any young person "who is shown, to the satisfaction of the local education authority, to have been up to the age of 16 under full-time instruction in a school recognised by the Board of Education as efficient . . . shall be exempt from the obligation to attend continuation schools."

For pupils in whose education the period from 14 till 16 forms the final stage, it is especially necessary that English should be treated as of outstanding importance. Yet, as we have already indicated,* it is liable to be pushed into the background. This may prove a real disaster for pupils of only average ability, and for those whose English has suffered through unhelpful home circumstances, or indifferent teaching in the early stages. We are convinced that a good many Secondary School pupils are bewildered and overweighted by the variety of their studies, and by the requirements of public examinations. As a result, it is quite possible for them to leave school comparatively illiterate, or, at any rate, lamentably defective in ability to use their own language, and much less capable than they should be of continuing their own education after leaving school. They have had imposed upon them a type of education which takes for granted a certain degree of culture. But the culture has not been there, and the education has missed its mark. This affords some explanation of the weaker aspects of the English work in Training Colleges, which we discuss in a later chapter.†

The Report of the Prime Minister's Committee on the Teaching of Natural Science, after suggesting, in Section 12, that in some Secondary Schools no foreign language should be compulsory, adds: "In all schools where no time, or only a limited time, is given to the

* Chapter II., § 37. † *See* § 166.

teaching of a modern language, it is essential that English subjects should be regarded as of at least equal importance with Science, and receive corresponding attention."

The representatives of the Modern Language Association stated in their evidence that "a knowledge of the structure of the mother tongue, and the ability to make use of it readily and correctly, should form the basis of all foreign language teaching," and they added that "while some pupils were capable of learning three foreign languages, others were unfit to learn one." We may also refer to the Report of the Modern Language Committee, Section 106: "We feel certain that there are many pupils struggling with two, three, or even four languages who would have done much better to confine themselves to one," and Section 91: "In schools where the majority of pupils do not stay for more than four years, it may be advantageous that, after due trial, a certain proportion should be entirely relieved of language study, and should concentrate their attention on English and the various other subjects which cannot be neglected in such schools. If some measure of solid achievement in one language can be attained, time and effort will not have been wasted; but time is scanty and effort must be concentrated; it must not be dissipated. A pupil may have very useful abilities and yet be incapable of learning any foreign language. After a full trial his time and effort should be devoted to other studies. In the curriculum of such pupils the study of English might be much more fully developed than it is at present." We have been informed that in one large Secondary School in London this plan has been adopted with good results. Girls who, after a probation of two years, show complete lack of aptitude for the learning of a foreign language give additional time to the study of the mother tongue.

Age 16–18.

119. The standard of work reached at this stage inevitably varies more than at the preceding stage,

for boys and girls are now beginning to follow their own bent. By the requirements of the "Advanced Courses" recently instituted by the Board of Education, English can be studied either as a main or as an additional subject. Furthermore, English already occupies this unique position in the system—that every pupil must take it. "In all Advanced Courses adequate provision must be made for the study and writing of English by every pupil either in connection with the main subjects of the Course or otherwise." *

As a main subject, English is placed in the "Modern Studies" Course with History and Modern Languages, and there will, no doubt, be a tendency on the part of the individual pupil to prefer one of the three. The important thing, however, is—to quote once more from the evidence of the Secondary School Inspectors—that "a course of English suitable for this stage should be in weight, seriousness, importance and difficulty, at least equal to the work which is done by pupils in ancient or modern languages. The study of English Literature should not be the mere desultory reading of books. It should have a definite purpose, and should afford worthy exercise for the intellects of the more capable pupils. It should be in no sense a soft option." It should include "a close and intensive study of specially selected works in verse and prose, chosen on account of their intrinsic value."

120. It is recommended by the English Association in *The Essentials of English Teaching*, and strongly urged by Professor Wyld in his evidence, that pupils specialising in English should be expected to study the growth and development of the English language, treating the subject from the point of view of present-day English, spoken and written. Note should be taken of changes in pronunciation, idiom, and vocabulary from the time of Chaucer to the present day. A language course devised on such lines would be more suitable for schools than a course in Old English, or what is usually understood by

* *Regulations for Secondary Schools, Chapter VIII.*, para. 48 (*c*).

Historical Grammar. As Professor Wyld observes, "the conception of the historical study of English has greatly expanded during the last few years. Anglo-Saxon is no longer the chief element, and the field for enquiry is not limited to the age from Alfred to the end of Chaucer's period. The problems of the modern period (c. 1430–1900) are at least as numerous, difficult, and important as those of the earlier periods."

121. On the importance of Composition at this stage it is scarcely necessary to dwell. Perhaps the whole field of education offers no fairer opportunity than is presented to the teacher responsible for the essays in a sixth-form, if he has the wit and the will to use it to widen the interests of his pupils and to touch their spirits to fine issues. He has no excuse for treading a dull round of hackneyed themes; let him keep his own mind fresh by reading and reflection, and he will find abundant thoughts that are worth his own and his pupils' following out. To the English specialist the essay will provide opportunities for investigating the secrets of style, for the imitation of favourite authors, for the beginnings of literary and historical criticism, for the discovery of his own ideas. For the specialist in other directions it will be an invaluable means of saving him from the narrowness of purely professional study or from the adoption of a purely professional jargon. The methods of teaching composition should be as varied as in the preceding stage: reproduction and précis may still with advantage be alternated with the essay.

122. At this stage, as in others, the teaching of Literature is beset by many dangers. It is fatal to make it a mere knowledge subject—to concentrate on the getting up of the actual subject matter or of elaborate annotations, and equally fatal to substitute for it a mere impression of literary history. At the same time, sentimentalism, and anything which conflicts with a scholarly attitude to literature must be avoided. Yet again, as the Headmaster of Bristol Grammar School remarked in his

evidence, "Linguistic, historic, and comparative methods of dealing with literature in schools have all failed, in so far as they have not been tinged with emotion." The pupils must be aware of literature as "the revelation of beauty and the expression of thought and emotion." Again, there is the danger of unassimilated, and therefore insincere, criticism. We have heard over and over again that answers to examination papers give much evidence of this. Literary criticisms should be read, but only after the works criticised have been independently studied, and the criticisms themselves must be literature of a high order, which will help the pupils to appreciate more intelligently what they have read and to discriminate between inferior work and the best. All precocious passing of judgment or appropriating without assimilating the opinions of others must be discouraged. The teaching, as Prof. Atkins urged, should help the pupil "to appreciate structural, metrical, and verbal effects in the various literary forms." And if the broad principles of criticism are to be properly illustrated, reference should frequently be made to the other creative arts, music, architecture, painting, etc., and the English lesson will thus become a gateway to both literature and other artistic interests, as Mr. Barton has made it at Bristol.

123. We do not emphasise the study of the history of literature, as the danger always is that too much rather than too little attention may be given to it. It is remarked in the Board of Education's Circular on the Teaching of English in Secondary Schools (issued in 1910) that while "there may and will be passages in the works studied by the class which can only be made intelligible by reference to the history of literature," yet "nothing is more likely to destroy the interest of boys and girls in literature than to burden their memory with the names of authors and the titles of works which they have never read." They "may often be given some preliminary knowledge of the sequence of the great English writers,

and of the nature of their chief works, and may well have put into their hands an account of the growth of English Literature dealing only with the principal writers and containing copious selections from their writings. But throughout school life this teaching will remain in a very real sense incidental." With this we agree. English literature at this stage may be studied from the point of view of history or with relation to its form as drama, epic, or essay; but, whatever method be adopted, the essential thing is that the text of the writers should be the first consideration.

124. So far we have considered English as a main study between 16 and 18, but it is almost more necessary to emphasise its importance in Advanced Courses in which it does not form a main subject. Specialists in Classics are necessarily receiving a literary training, and in good hands they are sure to discover the necessity for extensive English reading in order to carry out satisfactorily and comprehensively their study of the ancient civilisations; but the case of specialists in Mathematics or Science needs particular consideration. Science, as one of our witnesses put it, deals with the apparatus of life, as contrasted with people and ideas. The more Science in the curriculum, the greater the need for the study of language and literature. The study of Mathematics or of Science depends much less than do other studies upon the constant use of language, and in consequence, those who are specialising in them may, and often do, fail to achieve a command of English commensurate with the requirements of a liberal education. The Natural Science Committee were fully alive to this danger, and it is hardly necessary for us to do more than quote from their Report. They say, in Section 56, "All through the Science Course the greatest care should be taken to insist on the accurate use of the English language, and the longer the time given to Science the greater becomes the responsibility of the teacher in this matter. The conventional jargon of laboratories, which is far too common in much that is written on pure

and on applied Science, is quite out of place in Schools"; and, in Section 60, "Some literary study, including English, should have the first claim on the balance of the time of all Science students."

125. We are anxious to encourage in every way the institution in schools of Advanced Courses with English as a main subject, because we believe that the inclusion of English as a subject in which specialisation is possible reacts favourably on the teaching of English throughout the school and will make it easier to secure well-qualified teachers to undertake it. Holding this view, we have naturally asked ourselves whether the Regulations at present governing Advanced Courses give English the place to which it is entitled. We agree that when possible, English, or at least the special period of literature under study, should be taught with a background of history and modern foreign languages. But there is a danger in this, if carried too far. Complete correlation, rigidly enforced, would be fatal. We agree with several of our witnesses in regretting that an Advanced Course comprising Latin, English and History, is not permitted.* It has been pointed out to us that the object of the Modern Studies Course should be not primarily language study, but an attempt to comprehend the modern world by means of the careful study of two modern civilisations. We recognise the value of a Course with such an aim in view, and do not desire to interfere with it, but we think that a combination of Latin, English, and History might well be made permissible as an additional Course, and would form an excellent preliminary training for pupils who intend to take a University Honour School of English; and especially for prospective teachers of English. We should also welcome the option of a combination of Greek with English, since Greek thought and literature have a natural affinity with our own.

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* Such a Course is now sanctioned in the Regulations for Secondary Schools, dated 13 Sept., 1921.

Further, we recommend that the question of admitting English as an optional main subject in any of the Course shall receive serious consideration. The combination of parts of different Triposes at Cambridge (*e.g.*, Mathematics Part I., and English or a foreign language) has been successfully carried out, and we feel that a similar liberty might well be allowed in the schools, as all boys and girls who have the ability to follow an Advanced Course are not necessarily specialists.

The Public School Tradition.

126. In the Public Schools the general attitude to English teaching has changed considerably in recent years, and is still changing. All our witnesses showed a readiness to regard with sympathy the aim of raising the English standard in Public Schools, yet they were not entirely agreed among themselves as to whether the arts of writing and of reading can best be taught by direct or by indirect methods, nor as to the possibility of excellence in English being achieved independently of classical studies. Not a few Public Schools still show much hesitation in providing for the serious study of English in school hours. Their headmasters fully appreciate the influence of literature on character and mental powers. Yet, in some cases at least, they feel that school hours are not the time, nor the class-room the place, for the study of English. The feeling for literature they regard as a delicate plant which might not survive in the atmosphere of the class-room. Thus the Headmaster of Sherborne appealed to all in authority not to kill the enjoyment of English Literature and English Composition by drawing them into the maelstrom of competing "subjects." The Headmaster of Eton would "dogmatise only on the difficulty of teaching" English: "half-an-hour was generally enough for an English lesson; it was often hard to make it last an hour and keep people's attention." In the same spirit the Headmaster of Owen's School, Islington, asked "with a really

adequate school library, and a library in every Form-room of books which the Form was encouraged to think worth reading, including poetry; with opportunities every week for discussion of what they found amusing, and for self-expression through school magazines authorised and unauthorised; with debating societies and plays, in fact with anything they liked in the matter of English literature, would not the boys have all the opportunity required ?" Fear was expressed of the result of forcing the teaching of English literature, and we were reminded that such a remark as "the Schoolmaster devitalises literature" was a commonplace to-day. Stress was laid on the dangers of purely linguistic methods reminiscent of the old teaching of Classics, and of the mental dishonesty associated with examinations. No doubt these are real dangers. But over and above the apprehension of risks arising from incompetent teaching was the sense of incompatibility between the associations of the class-room and the fostering of a love for English literature.

127. Such views could only be expressed by those who realised keenly what the teaching of literature should be. Yet the significance of the contrast between their attitude and that of schools which have introduced the advanced study of English ought, we feel, to be considered briefly.

The new schools and the schools of the old tradition have approached each other in a remarkable way, but from entirely different starting points. A great Public School and a Municipal or County School in the same place may now be working on much the same lines. But the history and traditions of the older schools compel them to move slowly. They perceive difficulties which the new schools are less conscious of, or have already surmounted. They are acutely conscious of the variety of ways in which English fails to satisfy the preconceived notion of a "school subject," and the difficulty of accommodating it to the examination system. They fear the possibility of its being made, as the Classics have sometimes been made, the field for a narrow and technical

drill, and they realise the exceptional qualities called for in a teacher of English. We do not venture to say that their cautious attitude is unreasonable. They have to do with the English public school boy, who is an intensely reserved, and also an intensely conservative person, and it is their reverence for English literature, and not their disregard of it, which makes them reluctant to establish "yet another scholastic tradition."

Yet changes are taking place which, we think, are paving the way for further modification of the older conception of school subjects and school methods, and for the introduction of English literature as a really vital part of the curriculum On the modern sides of Public Schools we conceive that the strengthening of the English course is an urgent necessity. Already the modern side is often larger than the classical, and the old sense of predominance of humanistic studies and a humanistic tone has passed away from the boys and is fast passing away from the masters.

Some Headmasters no doubt recognise that if the tendency towards purely materialistic and utilitarian views of education is to be counteracted on the modern side, it can only be done with the help of English literature, and are legislating accordingly, but their example has not been widely followed as yet. In some Public Schools boys specialising in Science, no longer an inconsiderable minority, are actually receiving less literary training than similar specialists in the grant-aided schools. Meanwhile, it may well be that the reaction of the outside world upon the schools is assisting the introduction of English literature, especially modern English literature, in an unlooked-for way. From one Public School after another we hear that Literature, Music, Art, the urgent problems of modern social and political conditions are awakening a keen interest. We cannot help thinking that as a result of this new vitality which the schools claim to be experiencing, the class-room atmosphere will change sufficiently for the national literature, together with other

things which are felt and cared for, to find a larger place in it. All this new life cannot be crowded into out-of-school hours. The moral obligation on the public-spirited school boy to be constantly taking part "voluntarily" in some laudable out-of-school activity may become an excessive strain. It is very desirable, we agree, that the school boy should not lose too much of his free time. In the past, some of the best results in English literature have been attained in schools where boys were taught little English in class but given ample leisure for private reading and encouraged to use it in getting acquainted with the best books in their own language. On the other hand, we see clearly that this method can only be used with boys of some natural or acquired literary appetite, and we anticipate that English, even in the most conservative of schools, will more and more find its due place in the regular school course as the new educational ideals gradually penetrate the old and are not merely added to them. We look to see a progressive breaking down of the sharp distinction between the intellectual interests which are regarded as appropriate to school hours and those which are relegated to spare time.

Qualifications and Supply of Teachers.

128. In all this it is obvious that the task of the English teacher is a double one: first, to teach the pupil to speak and write clearly, forcibly and correctly; secondly, to foster a love of literature. The two functions call for different powers which are not always united in the same person. There is no solution of the difficulty which would be universally applicable. The inter-relations of composition and the study of literature are so close that they cannot be separated without some loss. It is clear that it will always be easier to find teachers who are competent for the first task than teachers who are capable of fulfilling the second. What we desire most emphatically to protest against is the old assumption that English is an easy

subject which can safely be left to a form-master or form-mistress chosen for the position on quite other grounds. So far as the study of literature is concerned, at any rate, quite exceptional gifts are needed for the ideal guide, and it is not likely that the supply will ever be larger than the demand. Where a school is fortunate enough to possess a teacher who is specially successful in inspiring a love of literature, his powers should be utilised freely, and it is possible that, with this object in view, a separation of the composition from the literature in certain classes may be desirable.

In this connection we may call attention to the grants which the Board of Education is prepared to give to schools for "observation visits"—*i.e.*, visits paid by a teacher to another school for the purpose of studying methods and gaining experience.*

129. The ideal teacher is born, not made; and we have no wish to prescribe any one kind of preliminary training as essential. In the past, especially in the Public Schools, men who have had this gift have most often been trained in the Classics; in girls' schools they have often, but by no means always, taken honours in English Literature or in History at the University. The English teacher who has studied other subjects at the University—whether Classics, modern languages, history, or philosophy—has gained in breadth and in power by so doing; so has the teacher who has studied music, painting, architecture, or some branch of natural science. On the other hand, the teacher who has specialised in English at the University ought to have an advantage in scientific thoroughness and grasp of his subject. The presence of such specialists on the staff of a school is important for the proper organisation of the study and for the maintenance of a scholarly standard; and whenever a school has such a specialist, he should be allowed the same powers of direction as are usually given to the senior teacher in Mathematics, Science, or Modern Languages.

* *See* Article 44 of Regulations for Secondary Schools.

130. But, a scholarly standard once secured, much good work in English literature can be done by teachers who have not been trained as specialists, provided that they have good knowledge, interest, and the gift of communicating their own enthusiasm. Such enthusiasm can be imparted in many ways, of which lecturing is only one. Sometimes a more useful service is performed by simply guiding the pupil to the right sort of reading. Let adequate libraries be provided in schools, and the number of actual lessons may with advantage be curtailed in order that more time may be given to boys and girls to read by themselves.

131. All arrangements should, in short, be governed by that central principle on which stress was laid in our Introductory Chapter: the necessity of keeping literature in close touch with life. It is by virtue of this principle that a non-specialist teacher endowed with sympathy, humour, wide experience and outlook, is more successful than a highly-trained specialist who lacks these gifts. But in urging this we do not for a moment forget that the ideal of "sound learning" is just as essential in literature as in any other study. What we wish to find in the English teacher of the future—and what we look to the Universities to supply—is the combination of a sensitiveness to the aesthetic and emotional appeal of literature with a reverence for exact knowledge and an appreciation of the use of language as an instrument of exact thought. The teacher has to avoid the danger of investing literature with associations that will prevent its being a delight and a refreshment. On the other hand he must avoid the danger of using it to cultivate a shallow impressionism and an insincere fluency, in which case it simply feeds "the lie in the soul" from which it is the aim of the best education to deliver us.

The prevalent notion that the accurate scholar is necessarily a "Dryasdust" is without justification. On the other hand it is true that the artistic temperament which is most nervously responsive to the impression

given by literature and art, and therefore peculiarly fitted to communicate its own enthusiasms to others, is apt to be impatient of continuous hard work. But the teachers who have made literature, whether English or Classical, both the best educational instrument and the most valuable possession for life for their pupils, have not been those who communicate the enthusiasms (and prejudices) of mere impressionism, but those who have made a scholar's "infinite capacity for the taking of pains" attractive by the force of their personality, their sympathy and humour—a sympathy and humour which were doubtless natural to them but which they have enriched in great measure through their study of the great writers. A moment's reflection on the personality of the most distinguished professors and teachers of literature during the last 40 years will bear this out. The scientific ideal and the ideal of human interest should not be thought of as opposed. The best teacher of literature will keep both in view.

CHAPTER V.

ENGLISH IN COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL LIFE, WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO CONTINUATION AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION.

THE NEEDS OF BUSINESS.

132. The terms of our reference, which make particular mention of "the needs of business," obliged us to inquire (i) what these needs were as regards English, and (ii) whether the provision at present made for English teaching in the schools, especially in those designed to prepare students for an industrial and commercial career, was likely to meet those needs.

133. In addition to hearing evidence from those concerned with education in Continuation, Technical and Commercial Schools, we issued a paper of questions to a number of prominent English firms, asking them, among other things: whether they found difficulty in obtaining employees with an adequate command of their own language; whether they desired their young people to be versed in what is known as "Commercial English"; what importance they attached as business men to a training in English, and what methods they advocated in order to make such training more effective from the business point of view. Some 40 firms replied to this questionnaire, almost all of them writing in a fashion which showed that the matter had received their close attention and was felt to be one of considerable moment from the standpoint of trade. We were thus provided with a valuable and weighty body of evidence, and desire to express our thanks to these great business houses for their assistance and encouragement.

134. The terms of our reference appear to distinguish between 'the requirements of a liberal education" and

"the needs of business," Had this distinction, upon investigation involved a conflict of educational aims, we should have been obliged to report that "the needs of business" must be strictly subordinated to those of "a liberal education," as interpreted in our Introduction. To the surprise of some of us, and to the satisfaction of us all, the answers to our questionnaire made it clear that what the leading firms of the country desired most of all in their employees were just those qualities which a liberal education, rightly understood, should develop in young people. Indeed, their chief count against the schools was that present-day education was not liberal enough, and, in particular, that it was conventional and divorced from reality. Naturally the "realities" they had principally in mind were those of the industrial and commercial world; and, as will presently appear, we consider them wholly within their rights in insisting that education should reckon with the vocation of the taught. Yet, as their vigorous denunciation of "Commercial English" showed, they were very far from demanding that education should be the bondman of vocation. Rather the implicit assumption which underlay their requirements was that British trade would be efficient and successful in proportion to the amount of intellect and imagination brought to bear upon it, and that the schools would best serve "the needs of business" by developing to the utmost the intellect and imagination of those about to enter the business world.

135. It was encouraging to discover that, with one voice, these firms placed a training in English first in their requirements. The following typical extracts from their replies will sufficiently illustrate the position assigned to English from the business point of view:—"Training in English is of supreme importance for business." "We consider that English should be the basic study in all school courses." "Clear expression bespeaks a clear and trained mind, and both react upon one another very intimately. From any point of view, therefore, the

teaching of English is very important—in the way of self-culture or of business efficiency." "Manner of speech is of the greatest importance in business, whether in the relations of an employer to his principals or of a representative to outside business men. . . . This applies not only to the avoidance of solecisms but to ease and readiness of speech, and above all, to modulation of tone." The term "English" was, moreover, generally interpreted in the most liberal spirit, and many firms criticised the schools on the ground that too little attention was given to literature and guidance in reading. It was refreshing to find the teaching of literature advocated as an essential preparation for a business career; yet this was the burden of a large number of the replies we received; and the claims of literature could hardly have been expressed in more absolute terms than in the following sentences:—"I would advocate an extensive reading course for all students." "English should be taught through the study of good literature rather than through definite grammar lessons." "Wise guidance in reading we consider the best method to adopt in teaching English." "Most young people have few ideas because they do not read much." "We think that a great deal of time spent in grammar, spelling, punctuation would be far better used in the study of English literature in its broader aspects. Only a really free atmosphere in the school will give sufficient opportunities for the spoken word. . . . We suffer very much through inability to express ideas fully and logically on the part of our employees, and we attribute it to a large extent to the absurdly repressive, flat atmosphere of the ordinary elementary school." "A library should be freely used; standard authors introduced with scare, and with the aim of arousing interest and pleasure. Plays, as far as possible, should be read in character."

136. Such being the attitude of representative men of business towards the teaching of English literature, it was not surprising to find a hostility mingled with contempt in all but six of our replies for that strange linguistic

phenomenon known as "Commercial English."* Typical comments in reply to our query regarding it were:—"A meaningless business jargon." "No. We want good general education." "It tends to kill originality in commercial life." "A fine language like English ought not to be polluted by the introduction of ugly commercial terms." "Usually an impediment to clear expression." "We spend hours trying to kill the jargon taught in business colleges and cultivated in shops and stores, and to substitute simple natural English, whether spoken or written." "Commercial English, as frequently used in business, employs terms and phrases which are at best stunted expressions in English, and in many cases are grammatical mistakes." With this evidence before us, we have no hesitation in reporting that "Commercial English" is not only objectionable to all those who have the purity of the language at heart but also contrary to the true interests of commercial life, sapping its vitality and encouraging the use of dry, meaningless, formulæ just where vigorous and arresting English is the chief requisite. Further, this sweeping condemnation by the leading business firms of the country demonstrates that, whatever its origin may have been, "Commercial English" now continues to retain its hold upon commercial schools and colleges solely through the influence of an evil tradition and of the makers of text-books to whom such a tradition is of commercial value. The large business houses,

* Some readers of this Report may be unacquainted with "Commercial English." We, therefore, give a few examples of the words and idiom in the dialect:—*prox.* (next month); *ult.* (last month); *inst.* (this month); *of even date* (of to-day); *beg to* or *hereby beg to* (a meaningless prefix, found before verbs of all kinds, *e.g.*, "I beg to inform you," "hereby beg to say," &c.). *Your favour, your esteemed favour, yours* (your letter); *I am in receipt of your favour, your favour duly to hand,* or more familiarly, *yours to hand* (your letter has reached me); *per* (by) *as per* (in accordance with); *same* (it, *e.g.*, "Yours to hand and we beg to say we shall give all attention to same"); *make* or *quote you* (make an offer, *e.g.*, "We can make you a discount of 6 per cent," "My traveller had the pleasure of quoting you for the order"); *the favour of your immediate reply will oblige* (I shall be glad to hear from you at once).

however, are giving a lead which must in time have its effect upon the commercial community generally, and it is our confident hope that "Commercial English" will presently become one of the curiosities of dead and forgotten speech.

137. It is clear, then, that in the opinion of those best qualified to speak, the chief "need of business" is a liberal supply of young entrants, trained to express themselves in spoken and written English with facility and correctness, and possessed of that broad outlook which wide reading and the study of literature may be expected to provide. It is equally clear that this supply, so far from being liberal, is at present almost non-existent. Our first question: "Have you found difficulty in obtaining employees who can speak and write English clearly and correctly?" was answered with an emphatic affirmative by all but a few firms who only engaged young persons after taking matriculation or its equivalent. Several, moreover, pointed out that there was nothing to choose between the "public school" and the elementary school product in this respect. All complained, often bitterly, of defects in spelling, punctuation, vocabulary, and sentence-structure. Spelling, in particular, received adverse comment. Many firms, on the other hand, insisted that the most serious defect was the total inability of their employees to express themselves readily and correctly on simple matters. "It is our experience," writes one, "that the average clerk is afraid to use in correspondence the comparative simplicity and directness of speech. Long words (the exact meaning of which he may only vaguely comprehend) and journalistic circumlocutions appear to him necessary for the composition of a business letter. . . . The business world has little use for the ornate verbosity which youthful essayists are often encouraged to attempt." "The most important defect," another declares, "is lack of appreciation of the fact that what is written (or typed) should be intelligible"; and yet another: "In my opinion an essential preliminary is a

training in clear and logical *thinking*, without which clear expression is impossible." In so far as these criticisms affect elementary and secondary schools, they will be dealt with in other parts of our Report; but we have one caveat to enter at this juncture. While we are not concerned to deny the substantive truth of the foregoing strictures, we feel strongly that business men, our witnesses included, are apt to expect a standard of education and intelligence in their young employees which is beyond the scope of the average boy and girl of 13 to 14 years of age, however excellent their previous instruction. It is idle, for example, to look for a highly developed capacity in " logical thinking " from individuals only at the threshhold of adolescence. The human being has its stages of growth and needs an education appropriate to those stages. If the adult critics of our educational system would attempt to recall the limits of their own mental horizon when at the age of those young people whose deficiencies provoke their condemnation, criticism and condemnation would be less prevalent and more helpful. Thus, while we believe that the improvements we recommend elsewhere in the teaching of English in elementary schools would provide the business world with better material than that which it is at present able to secure, we are bound to look to improvements in adolescent education, particularly in those institutions which prepare students directly for commercial and industrial life or furnish part-time instruction to young people who are already wage earners, for any permanent or wholesale remedy.

EVENING CONTINUATION SCHOOLS.

138. During the year 1917–18, the latest for which figures are available, the number of Evening and other part-time schools, excluding the larger Technical Institutes, recognised by the Board of Education under its Technical School Regulations was 3,328, with 455,122 students in attendance. The courses and schools falling under this

head are of a very varied description, but we estimate that about a third (*i.e.*, some 150,000) of the total number of students were under 16 years of age and attending Evening Continuation Schools for about six hours a week during the autumn and winter months. Until the Education Act of 1918 comes generally into force, these evening classes furnish the young wage-earner who has just left the elementary school with his only opportunity for continuing his education. Thus, though the hours are short and both teachers and students have normally completed a day's work before they enter the evening school door, such classes have hitherto played an important part in the national economy of education, and in some northern industrial towns they are attended by a very high percentage of those leaving elementary schools. Attendance being voluntary, the desires and aspirations of the students exert a powerful influence upon the curriculum, which is generally framed upon a two-years' basis and offers alternatives, known as "commercial," "industrial," "domestic," and "rural," courses, suitable to the varying needs of the students. After two years in one of these evening school courses the boy or girl usually takes an examination conducted either by the Local Education Authority or some external examining body such as the Union of Lancashire and Cheshire Institutes, and the passing of this examination gives the entry to the Senior Courses in the local Technical School or College.

139. It is obvious that instruction for six hours a week during some 24 weeks in the winter months does not provide much scope for the teaching of English, which can at most claim but a third of the available time. For long very little English beyond "commercial correspondence" and the writing of letters was attempted. But the introduction of the "course system," the effects of which began to be generally felt about 1906–7, made it possible for the first time to place English on a satisfactory basis in junior technical courses. This system, which rendered it cheaper for a student to take a group-course

than to concentrate upon one or two of the more obviously vocational subjects such as typewriting, cookery, or spinning, brought about the re-organisation of technical instruction in this country. The despotism of the individual student's crude aspirations, if not overthrown, was circumvented; he was obliged to take appropriate mathematical and scientific subjects in conjunction with the purely technological subjects which had attracted him to the technical school; in short, technical "education," as distinct from "instruction," had become a possibility though, as we shall see, it did not become a complete reality. From the inception of this new system it was realised that English was an essential ingredient in junior courses, whether of the commercial, industrial, rural, or domestic type, and at least one, often two, hours a week was given to it. But at first English was felt to be an excrescence rather than an integral part of the course; students resented their obligations to attend on evenings when English was taught, and did their best to avoid them. This was due to the difficulty of fusing English with the other subjects of the course, so that the student, for example, failed to see the connection between the study of a novel, which was the form English usually took at that time, and subjects like practical mathematics and mechanics, which were a definite preparation for engineering and similar industries. It was necessary somehow to relate English to the vocation of the student if he was to become a willing learner.

140. Of recent years this has been accomplished by broadening the conception of English to include some study of the history and geography of the industry in which the locality is chiefly interested. In other words a well-written text-book of social history was substituted for the novel as the basis of class-work in English. Where this change has taken place under suitable conditions, and it has now done so in most thickly populated industrial centres, English has become one of the most popular subjects of the evening school curriculum. The change

and its success have moreover taught educationalists a lesson which they are not likely to forget, a lesson with implications far transcending those of the evening school problem. One of the firms, in answering our questionnaire, writes: "At present the teaching of English is made to depend too purely on its literary value and interest. What might be called Applied English, *i.e.*, the application of English to industrial and commercial work, should be taught, though not as a separate subject." The history of evening school education during the past 20 years fully justifies this observation. What is needed is not "Commercial English" but English which takes cognisance of the facts of commercial life, not "Technical English," but English which at least does not turn its back upon the technical achievements of the engineer. The application should not be difficult, if English is, as we claim, wide as the English mind and broad as English life. But it has its dangers, as one distinguished witness pointed out. "There are those," he said, "who think that the easiest approach to the interest of the particular type of student with whom the Continuation Schools will deal lies in taking the locality, or even the industry, with which he is familiar, and making this the starting point for a gradually widening study of the past. Whether this is so or not I do not know, but I hope that those teachers who start from the pupils' vocation will be very careful not to confuse the starting point with the goal. What we want is to give the children their share of the whole of the splendid literary and historic heritage of humanity." We are conscious of the risks here hinted at, but we believe that they are worth taking, or rather that if they be not taken still greater dangers will be incurred. English, unrelated to the vocation or environment of the part-time student may appear to him a thing alien, unintelligible, forcibly imposed upon him. If, however, we begin with what is familiar and understood, we at once gain his willing co-operation in a journey of spiritual adventure which has no limits At the same time, there are cases where

the appeal through simple imaginative literature, in the form of poetry or plays, can be made at once.

141. That an English course with such a vocational bias may be liberally conceived and carried out, and that it need by no means exclude "literary value and interest" will appear from the following suggestions for a Junior Commercial Course, taken, with slight verbal modifications, from a *Memorandum on Commercial Instruction in Evening Schools*, issued by the Board of Education in 1919:—

"English is perhaps the most important, and certainly the most difficult subject of the junior commercial course. The scheme of work in the subject and the method of its treatment must depend upon the object to be achieved. From the vocational point of view the object of the English lessons should be so to develop the students command over the mother-tongue as to enable them to express themselves, whether in writing or speech, accurately, concisely and effectively. Literary power is not a certain sign of commercial acumen; but the power to say what has to be said in an effective, finished, and even graceful way is, nevertheless, a great asset in commercial life.

"There is only one method by which power over the mother-tongue can be acquired: by practice. Those have the best command of English, who from birth have lived in an environment where accurate language, a copious vocabulary, a pure pronunciation, and the habit of reading are characteristic. All that can be done in a school, therefore, is to reproduce these conditions, so far as is possible. The pupils should be enabled to read good English, to hear good English, and should be practised with a view to their speaking and writing good English.

"One cannot write or speak worthily, however, without having something to say. And the stock of knowledge possessed by the average student in a junior course is comparatively small. The basis of the study of English in an evening school, therefore, should be the study of a book or of books. The books used should be so chosen as to provide the students with new stores of facts and ideas.

In a vocational course these facts and ideas should have some relation to the main daily occupation of the students, that is to the economic side of life. If a book is to be s udied throughout an evening school session, it should be a book which requires study and deserves it. It is this consideration which, in general, rules out the novel as the basis of the study of English in evening schools. Novels are written not primarily for our instruction, but to edify or to amuse. And, if they are works of art, a taste for them is not promoted by a process of slow study extending over some 25 weeks. As a rule, therefore, it is recommended that the work or works chosen as the basis of the English teaching should be a book demanding study, and in commercial courses the most suitable books will be found to be well-written elementary treatises on history or geography viewed from the commercial or the rather broader economic standpoint.

"Where, however, the teacher feels that he has distinctly literary interests and finds by experience that he can stimulate his class by the study of literature, whether of the classical or the more popular order, there is no reason why he should not do this and every reason why he should. In fact, the intellectual interests of the teacher, as well as of the class, are a vital consideration. But we know that the number of people, teachers as well as others, who have living literary interests, is relatively small. It will be well, therefore, to determine the book to be chosen, not upon the convention that anybody can interest everybody in literature, but upon the facts.

"Of the two hours available one should, as a rule, be given to the study of the books chosen. Reading aloud with comment and discussion may be varied by silent reading. But it will be of great use and will save much time if students are required to read and consider their text-book at home. As a regular practice students should be required to reproduce orally or in writing the substance of what they have read. Oral reproduction will, as a rule, require skilful questioning and other teaching methods.

But such oral exercises, properly conducted, are invaluable in training the pupils in the proper assimilation of essential facts, in the enlargement of the vocabulary, and in self-possessed and adequate speech.

"The written reproduction of the substance of paragraphs or chapters is the best introduction to the important art of précis writing. But this exercise should never take the form of paraphrase. The written exercise should always be in the nature of summary. Paraphrase, especially of good literature, usually takes the form of converting good English into bad. Students should also be asked, not merely to reproduce what has been read, but to write on topics suggested by that reading; and this in turn should be varied by composition relating to such business affairs as are within the range of the students' experience or imagination. Especially in the second year increasing use should be made of the students' experience, views and ideas. Students should also be taught to compose letters. Too much time need not be spent upon formal openings and subscriptions; but the demand that students should be familiar with the ordinary form of a business letter is a reasonable demand. In all written exercises neat and legible handwriting and careful arrangements should be insisted upon.

"Whatever views may be held as to the teaching of formal English Grammar, there can be no doubt that, especially when conducted by the methods of parsing and analysis, it is out of place in a junior commercial course. It is discouraging and uninteresting to the very large majority of the students, and this alone is a sufficient justification for its rejection under a system of voluntary attendance. Moreover, it is not found that students who are "taught grammar" speak or write more correctly than those who do not undergo formal lessons in the subject. Grammar should be taught incidentally as occasion arises, and it should never be forgotten that in living languages it is usage which controls grammar and not grammar usage. The exercises of the pupils, written

and oral, will provide errors sufficient in number for the demonstration of the more useful grammatical rules. Nor will it be necessary to construct incorrect sentences for correction. The pupils will provide bad models in all too great abundance. It is the business of the teacher to provide good models.

"Inasmuch as reading increases the range of the students' knowledge and tends to enrich their vocabulary, a school library containing history, geography, biography, travel, fiction (not exclusively classical) should be provided in connection with each evening school. Such a library should be well stocked with books providing more detailed knowledge of the historical, geographical, or literary subjects which form the theme of the class textbook chosen. Provision should be made in this way for the satisfaction of intellectual curiosity aroused in class hours. And, as nearly all evening school students read something outside their class hours, material for enabling them to distinguish between the relatively good and the relatively poor in literature should be at hand. Co-operation between the school and the public library should also be established. Guidance which is firm and not too censorial in the matter of adolescent reading is of no small importance.

"Finally, even where literature is not the main feature of the class instruction, ten minutes or more are often well spent by the teacher (or some pupil with dramatic gifts) reading passages from literature such as will arouse and hold the attention of the students and possibly lead them to the works from which such passages are taken. Oratory, poetry, and drama, dramatic passages from the great English novelists, humour, may all be drawn upon for an episode, which should be confined to the reading or declamation itself, and should not be attempted unless it can be carried through effectively.

"It is suggested that English, broadly interpreted in this fashion, and based upon the study either of man in his social and economic relations in the past or

upon the present action and reaction between man and the physical control of the earth, and varied by the intellectual and emotional appeal of literature will not only provide the human element without which a junior course must be deficient, but will do much to promote that power to speak and to write effectively which is a most valuable commercial qualification."

142. The future of junior evening school courses is uncertain. The passing of the Education Act of 1918 will in course of time provide Day Continuation Schools for the entire adolescent population of the country, not otherwise catered for, and will compel attendance for 320 hours in the year in place of the 150 hours' instruction which is all a diligent evening school student could hope to receive per annum. From our point of view, the change is not only welcome but absolutely essential. However carefully planned, instruction in English in the evening school could never attain, within the narrow time-limit imposed upon it, the full results we desire, even with the most hard-working students and the best intentioned teachers. Yet we cannot deny that the voluntary evening school system has been fruitful in valuable experiment, especially within the particular field of our inquiry.

DAY CONTINUATION SCHOOLS.

143. We interpret the specific mention of Continuation Schools in the terms of our reference as a request that we should make recommendations as regards the teaching of English in the Day Continuation Schools with which the Education Act of 1918 will crown the elementary school system, and which are already springing up here and there in different parts of England in anticipation of statutory compulsion. The problem to which we addressed ourselves was well stated for us by Mr. E. K. Chambers, then Principal Assistant Secretary of the Continuation Schools Branch at the Board of Education, and we cannot do better than begin by quoting from his

evidence. "I think it is clear," he said, "that the teaching of the Humanities in Continuation Schools must rest almost entirely upon English. There will not be time for any prolonged or intensive study of foreign languages, such as would make these a doorway into literature or history, and the pupils will not as a rule have had any grounding in foreign languages in their elementary schools. If foreign languages are taught at all in the Continuation Schools, it will mainly be for the limited purpose of serving the vocational needs of pupils employed in commerce. The discovery, therefore, of successful methods of teaching English to young wage-earners between the ages of 14 to 18 is one of the most important problems which Continuation Schools will have to solve . . . It is, however, clear that the time available for English will be strictly limited. The competing demands of Physical Training, Mathematics, Science and Handicrafts, not to speak of vocational subjects, will ensure this. The teachers of English will probably be fortunate if they can secure two hours a week for their subject. I suppose that this limitation of time will exclude the possibility of any such systematic study of English as can be attempted in Secondary Schools and that the aim of the teacher will have to be stimulus rather than specific attainment. But the study will not be of much value, unless it can at least accomplish three things :--

(*a*) It should enable the pupil to use English, both in speech and in writing, as a clear and precise medium of expression, and with some regard to the tradition and decencies of the language. If he has already acquired this facility in the elementary school, it should enable him to convert it into a life-long habit.

(*b*) It should evoke in him a love of reading, both as a means of obtaining knowledge, and as one of the chief recreations and consolations of life.

(*c*) It should help to purify his emotions and sentiments, and to establish a right judgment of values in character, by bringing him into contact with emotion and

character as expressed in fine examples of lyric, dramatic and narrative poetry."

With these aims we are in complete accord and gladly adopt them as our own. Remembering, however, that, in Mr. Chambers' own words, "the teaching of the Humanities in Continuation Schools must rest almost entirely upon English," we feel it important not to narrow the term "English" in this connection too strictly to its literary significance; and we would, therefore, add a fourth aim, *i.e.*—

(*d*) It should make the pupil at least conscious of the past history of the English people and of their position and function in the existing family of nations.

144. In making this addition we desire to express our recognition and approval of the fact that a number of the new Continuation Schools, following in the steps of many Evening Schools, are likely to make some kind of simple social history and geography the centre of their English course. English, as we have stated in our Introduction, connotes the discovery of the world by the first and most direct way open to us, and the discovery of ourselves in our native environment. For students in an industrial area "the first and most direct way open" is a study of the historic causes which have given birth to the conditions under which they live and work and of the economic network of trade flung world-wide in which their township has its share. We are likewise conscious that English will be on its trial in the new Continuation Schools, as it was in the Evening Schools, and that it will succeed in proportion as its teachers bring it to bear directly upon life and show that it helps to make more intelligible those processes of life which are most familiar to the taught. Nor need such treatment be confined to schools in industrial areas. A witness from Wales, where local patriotism is the life-blood of national art and literature, urged upon us with great force that in the Continuation Schools England had a unique opportunity of reviving local patriotism and so

laying a popular basis for a new renaissance. "These schools," he declared, "should become the guardians of the local folk culture, one hitherto largely unexpressed and unknown because it has existed beneath that form of culture which our classical education has given us. Hence English, that is speech, song and dance, acting and craftsmanship, and history in the form of a social philosophy based upon local manners and customs, should have foremost consideration. The subject matter should be primarily local because the great majority of the pupils will remain in the locality, because almost every community in the British Isles has its own local communal tradition and pride of place, because an interest in such activities will result in the awakening of interest in other communities, and lastly because no real abiding civic consciousness is possible which is not founded on tradition and welded firmly together by a sense of long common effort for the commonweal." These views, with which we have much sympathy, find a striking echo in the preface to a little volume of Yorkshire dialect poems published in 1918 by the late F. W. Moorman, Professor of English in the University of Leeds. "In my dialect wanderings through Yorkshire," he writes, "I discovered that while there was a hunger for poetry in the hearts of the people, the great masterpieces of our national song made little or no appeal to them. They were bidden to a feast of the rarest quality and profusion, but it consisted of food that they could not assimilate. Spenser, Milton, Pope, Keats, Tennyson, all spoke to them in a language which they could not understand, and presented to them a world of thought and life in which they had no inheritance. But the Yorkshire dialect verse which circulated through the dales in chap-book or Christmas almanac was welcomed everywhere. . . . 'Poetry,' declared Shelley, 'is the record of the best and happiest moments of the happiest and best minds,' and it is time that the working men and women of England were made partakers in this inheritance of wealth and joy." We

believe it to be in the highest interests of English culture that local patriotism, with all that this entails, should be encouraged. We believe also that the establishment of Continuation Schools for the young wage-earners of this country offers an opportunity for such encouragement which it would be disastrous to neglect. And though we are not directly concerned with the position and treatment of history in these schools, we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that local history, wisely interpreted, adapted to the needs of adolescent students, and studied not as an end in itself but as an introduction to "the whole splendid literary and historic heritage of humanity," is one of the strongest allies of our cause.

Suitable text-books for this subject are scarce as yet; but they are increasing in number year by year, and we are hopeful that they will be forthcoming in sufficient number and variety for the needs of the Continuation Schools when the system becomes generally established.

(*a*) Composition, Spoken and Written.

145. We return to our three primary aims, and consider the means of attaining them. The business world complains that its young employees are almost inarticulate; what can be done to remedy this in the Continuation School? There is only one recipe for the tied tongue and the laggard or awkward pen—practice. First there must be as much practice as the time table will permit in speaking the English language. This comes first both naturally and in order of importance. The tongue is an instrument many thousands of years older than the pen, and readiness of speech is the best preparation for fluency of writing. Moreover it must be remembered that only a small proportion of the students will be destined for a clerical or literary career, and that even these will more frequently make use of the tongue than the pen in adult life. Training in speech is, we believe, too much neglected in all types of school; it is above all necessary in the

Continuation School. Debates, brief lectures by the students upon subjects chosen by themselves, the telling of stories, the careful description of familiar objects, and the ordinary conversation of the class-room, all may be used to develop in the boy or girl readiness, lucidity and command of language which will be of service not merely in commercial life but also in those political and social activities, such as trade union meetings and the like, which are becoming the preoccupation of an ever-increasing number of working people, and where sincerity and clear-headedness are matters of national concern. Indeed an insistence upon "logical thinking," which we deprecated as premature in the elementary school, should be one of the principal features of continuation school education, and the composition lesson will afford the best opportunities for its exercise. Limitations of time will probably forbid any concentrated attack upon formal deficiencies such as spelling, grammar, and the use of dialect expressions. If English be taught in the elementary school on the lines we recommend elsewhere, we believe that continuation school teachers ought not to be unduly troubled with these things. In any case if English, as we have laid it down, be not merely the medium of thought but the very stuff and process of it, that "stuff and process" is the primary concern of the teacher in a school for adolescents. His chief enemy will be not the mis-spelt word or the ungrammatical sentence but that "haziness of intellectual vision" which can only be dispersed by practice in exact, sustained, and consecutive thought. In our opinion there is no other remedy for the incoherence, verbosity, and unintelligibility of expression, upon which the business men comment so unfavourably; and we believe that this remedy will carry with it the remedy for the vexatious, though less important, formal defects referred to above.

146. In the matter of written composition we desire to emphasise a distinction of aim and function. Written English may be either artistic or practical; it may be

employed to express and develop the personality of the writer, or to make a statement of fact, to describe briefly and precisely something observed, to condense for the purpose of reference what has already been said or written. To the former we give the name "expression"; the latter we describe as "statement." Both must find a place in the Continuation School, but "statement" clearly demands particular attention in this type of education, since it is the power to make lucid statements on paper which will be of most service to the students in later life. The traditional "essay" to be written at large upon some vague theme, which is still popular with some teachers, probably because it gives them so little trouble, will, we hope, not be perpetuated in the Continuation School. Too much thought and care cannot be given to the question of English composition; and one of the teacher's chief duties will be to think out situations in practical life which require the use of the pen and to set exercises upon them to his students.

(*b*) The Use of Books.

147. There is probably no way in which the future Continuation Schools can do more to raise the intellectual and moral standard of English civilisation than by making "readers" of millions, who have hitherto left school too early to acquire the habit. By "readers" we understand those who look to books for enlightenment and recreation, and who show some power of discrimination in their choice. Our educational system, up to the present, has taught the process of reading, but, except for the fortunate few, it has made little attempt to show people what use to make of this accomplishment, and has, in consequence, left them the helpless prey of anything which appears in print. In this fact we see the root cause of the enormous increase in the proportion of worthless printed matter during the last 50 years. In so far as our press and periodical literature lack style and distinction, they do so because the public which buys them,

that is to say the product of the elementary schools, has never learnt to ask for these qualities. We urge therefore very strongly that the home reading of the students should be regarded as a matter of the first importance in the Continuation Schools. The only satisfactory way of dealing with it, in our opinion, is that each school should have a well-stocked lending library, the volumes of which can be taken to the class-room, handled by the students and discussed by the teacher. For only so can books worth reading be brought to the student's notice and his taste moulded under expert guidance. The English teacher, moreover, will find in such a library an invaluable instrument for his purpose, since he will by its means be enabled to extend his civilising influence outside the hours of instruction and into the home of those he teaches. It is important, however, that in stocking these libraries regard should be had to the tastes of the adolescent wage-earner. In other words the books must be attractive, or they will not be read. Novels of school-life, of adventure, and even detective stories like those of Sir A. Conan Doyle, should form one section. Another section should cater for the student's interest in modern technical achievement, *e.g.*, railways, aviation, and so on, while natural history and hobbies must not be forgotten. A library of this kind will cost money, and we have elsewhere suggested measures by which the expense may be kept within due limits.* But whatever the cost, we are convinced that education authorities will here be laying out capital which will yield a very high rate of interest in the form of social enlightenment. No one has expressed this better than the late Mr. C. E. B. Russell, who knew the seamy side of adolescent life in our cities as well as any other man of his time and yet never for a moment ceased to believe in education as a cure for social maladies. "The taste for good reading," he writes, "acquired at school may do for the boy and girl when placed out what all their other pursuits may fail to do; it may provide them

* *See* §§ 301–303.

with an interest which, when games and athletics and youthful hobbies are faded dreams, will be as strong as ever, which will compensate them for the loss of other good influences and last their lives. The personal ascendency of the teachers who may have won their admiration is likely to dwindle after they have left the schools, but if they have learnt to love books they will seldom lack friends. The drab uniformity of their lives will be illumined by imagination; they will have taken up something of their heritage of civilisation; their interests and sympathies will be wider, their sense of citizenship more keen—and they will possess an inexhaustible source of happiness in their homes—a treasure which grows as it is shared, and cannot be consumed with time." *

(*c*) The Influence of Literature.

148. We have insisted in our Introduction that education is guidance in the acquiring of experience and that therefore literature, which is the record of the experiences of the greatest minds, is or should be an instrument of the highest value in the class-room. Yet its use therein is attended with special dangers, dangers which will probably be peculiarly present in the Continuation School. There is, for example, the difficulty of bridging the gulf between the mind of the poet, and that of the young wage-earner, and we have heard a good deal of evidence, from different quarters of the educational field, that if this gulf be too great the student may recoil from the attempt to cross it and come to dislike literature in consequence. The first point we would make, therefore, is that the ascent to Parnassus should be as easy as possible at the outset, that literature is written primarily for enjoyment, and that unless it be welcomed with that initial enjoyment its influence will be sterile. It may even be that the imaginations of the young readers, blunted with a surfeit of cheap sensational periodicals, will need as a first tonic something only a little higher in quality

* *Libraries for Reformatory and Industrial Schools.*

than that from which it is hoped to wean them, something in fact which is not strictly literature at all. Another difficulty is that literature, not being a knowledge subject, cannot and should not be *taught*. It is to be communicated to the students in such a way that they will experience it rightly, that right experience being the sole aim of literary work. Now this makes literature awkward material for class-room purposes. The teacher, being a teacher, has a standing, an almost overwhelming, temptation—to teach. The very atmosphere of the class-room, with its paraphernalia of study, is one in which the wings of poesy cannot readily beat. But such obstacles will, we believe, be overcome if literature be experienced in the way it ought to be, that is through the living voice and by actual impersonation. Reading aloud, recitation and dramatic performance are the right methods of dealing with literature in school. They are not the only methods, but in the continuation school time will hardly permit of others. And since dramatic representation is at once the most alluring and intense form of literary experience for young adolescents, we hope and expect that it will play a very important part in continuation school education.*

149. It may be objected that this is a large programme for the two hours a week which is all that is likely to be allocated to the humanities in the continuation school. In making our recommendations we have kept in mind the fact that the English teacher will probably have opportunities of exerting his influence out of school hours. Much, as we have said, can be done in this way by means of the lending-library. There will also, we hope, be dramatic societies, debating societies, and a magazine edited by the students in every continuation school. Yet two hours a week, extending over most of the year, provides plenty of scope for a teacher who is both enthusiastic and economical of seconds.

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* *See* § 292.

We received striking evidence confirming this from the Instructor in English at the Royal Naval College, Dartmouth. Except that the boys are picked, this institution in many respects bears a strong resemblance to what a good continuation or junior technical school may be. The aim is vocational, no Classics are taught, and the age range is from 14 to 17. Moreover, only two hours a week are allotted to English. The following extracts from the report of the Instructor's evidence will show what use is made of them. "He exerted all his ingenuity to make the work fresh and original. He encouraged boys newly arrived from preparatory schools to use their imagination as much as possible and to write without restraint. Their real work began with a training in observation. He gave them little problems, involving observation of something out of doors or in a book. Such problems were extremely popular with the boys, and were given not for the value of the answers but because they taught boys to be observant and to inquire into the reason of things. After this oral work commenced. Twice a term every boy lectured for 10 minutes on any subject he liked, and the progress which boys made—especially the duller boys—was extraordinary. In the written work clearness was made the first essential, and a good deal of description of concrete objects was attempted, great care being taken of course to prevent such exercises from becoming dull. He found précis writing also of considerable value, when properly treated. Great emphasis was laid upon the word as the basis of composition, until the boys had acquired the habit of using the right word. In Literature it was not possible to cover much ground, and all one could hope for was to introduce cadets to the best and to inculcate the habit of reading before they went to sea. Literature was based on the teaching of history. Shakespeare, for example, was studied concurrently with the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and the Romantic Revival in connection with the French Revolution. In addition to

this it was studied by subjects. Ballads, for example, were read from the beginning down to the ballads of Kipling. At the preparatory schools the boys had regarded all poetry as "sloppy" because they had been given the wrong kind of poetry. All would leave Dartmouth to go to sea possessed of a good knowledge of English literature, and most of them would be extremely keen on poetry. Boys were shy about producing their own verses, but it was remarkable how many boys showed him their verses, if he promised to tell nobody else about them." We have quoted at length from this evidence because we feel that the Continuation School may learn something from this attempt to solve a problem which closely resembles its own. In the course of the subsequent discussion this witness observed that "In naval education boys used their hands a good deal and enjoyed much responsibility, and to that special system of education it was largely due that cadets were not at all shy and were always ready to attempt anything whether they could do it or not." Here, once again, was a parallel with the young wage-earner, with his independence and his contact with practical life. Some of us were inclined to think that the striking success of the English course at Dartmouth was at least partly to be laid to the fact that a life which was felt to be real and had an object was more likely to encourage the love of literature than a life that was felt to be aimless. If so there is no reason to despair of English teaching in the Continuation School.

COMMERCIAL AND TECHNICAL SCHOOLS.

150. From our point of view the institutions under this head are the weakest spot in the educational system. Quite a number of classes in English and literature are to be found going on within their walls, and one witness confidently predicted that when the Continuation Schools had been established for some years a large increase in such non-vocational courses was to be expected in Technical Schools and Colleges. We cannot too strongly urge

that this result will not only fall far short of our hopes but will not even touch the real problem. The evidence of business men given at the beginning of this chapter demonstrates that the principal need of commerce and industry to-day is a supply of young persons possessed of qualities which a training in English alone can give them. What is required, therefore, is not more non-vocational classes in the Technical Schools, but more English in the vocational classes. In saying this we are not attempting to capture the Technical Colleges for what is often vaguely called "general education." We believe in technical education, and we yield to none in our admiration for what it has done and is doing for this country. But we hold that, nevertheless, it is at present imperfect and lop-sided, is not, indeed, rightly "education" at all. We hold equally that the remedy is simple. The introduction of a training in English into every technical course, a training carefully planned so as to be not an excrescence but an integral part of the course and to have a close and obvious connection with the profession or craft for which the students were preparing themselves, would not only react immediately upon their technical studies to their immense advantage but would give to technology the soul which it now lacks and, in the end, perhaps bring a new spirit into business at large. While, however, the remedy is simple it is by no means easy to effect. Indeed we are obliged to recognise that, under existing conditions, its application is attended with difficulties which are almost insuperable except for whole-time students. Part-time students in Technical Schools attend for the most part for six hours a week only; they attend at the end of the day after working hours; their attendance is voluntary—that is to say, they come to study subjects obviously bearing upon their profession or trade, and if they are not provided with the instruction they look for they will stay away. Such conditions give a tremendous pull to purely vocational interests, interpreted in the crude form in which the young aspirant to success con-

ceives them. Doubtless if he knew his true interests, his true vocational interests, he would demand that the instuction in English begun in the Evening or Day Continuation School should be continued in the Technical School or College. But he does not know them, and so long as his unenlightened ambitions are the factors which determine the content of the courses which he takes, we cannot hope to see much improvement in these courses from the standpoint of English culture. The institution of the course system has indeed compelled him to study the sciences connected with his special craft, and that is at least a step in the right direction. Nevertheless, facing as we must the facts of the situation, we hesitate tc recommend that he should be compelled, at present, to take the further step and study English as an integral part of his course.

151. We say "at present"; for there are happily many indications that English, or at least some form of humanism of which English will form a part, is coming to be recognised as an essential element in education designed as a preparation for industrial and commercial life. The evidence quoted in the first section of this chapter is a proof of this. Again, the new Draft Regulations of the Board of Education for Continuation, Technical and Art Courses, lay it down that a Local College "should fulfil two main functions in the educational life of the area which it serves. It should supply technical instruction . . . and it should provide facilities for disinterested intellectual development by means of classes in Literature, History, Economics, and other humane studies which make for wise living and good citizenship." Accepting these as functions of a Local College, and having in mind the recommendations of the recently issued Report upon Adult Education, the Association of Technical Institutions has lately passed the following resolutions :—

> "That this Association rejoices in the increasing recognition of the importance of Adult Education

and would welcome a large development of humane studies in its constituent institutions.

"That each Local College, as the acknowledged apex of the educational system of its own area, should become the recognised centre for the organisation of educational courses and classes for adults in that area, and should make provision for the supply of suitably qualified lecturers and class tutors and adequate library and other facilities incidental to such work."

That these resolutions are more than pious aspirations is shown by the recent appointment of a Director of Humanistic Studies to the staff of the Huddersfield Technical College, one of the more important technological institutes in the north of England, and by the fact that this appointment has immediately been followed by the rise of a number of classes for adults in or near Huddersfield. We welcome these developments and feel confident that the country is only at the beginning of a new "extension" movement which will affect the population more profoundly than any of its predecessors. But it is necessary in this section of our Report to point out that the "technical student" as such has his special needs, which are not touched upon either in the Regulations of the Board, quoted above, or in the resolutions of the Association of Technical Institutions. The establishment of classes in humane subjects for adult working-class students under the auspices of a Local College is in itself an admirable development; but, if the student taking specialised courses within the college remains unaffected by the humanistic atmosphere of the non-specialised classes, there is a danger that, while the rank and file of the industrial army grow increasingly enlightened, the officers will remain technologists and nothing more.

Thus, though we cannot see our way to recommending under existing conditions the compulsory introduction of humanistic subjects into higher technical courses for part-time students, we must strongly urge upon all autho-

rities concerned the vital importance of using every means in their power to bring before such students the advantages, vocational as well as cultural, of the pursuit of humane studies, and of offering them all possible facilities for that pursuit. In this connection we believe that the example of the Huddersfield Technical College might usefully be followed by other Local Colleges. The problem needs exploration in each locality, and can only be rightly explored by someone specially appointed for the task, who will be able to take stock of the requirements of internal students. A really inspiring representative of the humanities could do much in a technical college by means of occasional lectures, dramatic societies, debating societies, and such like. He will of course organise non-vocational classes in and out of the college, but if his influence does not touch the vocational classes also, he will be a failure, however great his success in other directions.

152. Another means to the end we have in view, a means even more direct than that just proposed, is to enlist the interest of technological teachers generally in the possibilities of technical education as distinct from technical instruction. Highly skilled as they usually are in the principles of the craft which it is their function to communicate to their students, such teachers not only often fail to grasp the importance of the larger professional outlook which a wisely planned course in English studies would open up, but are sometimes themselves lacking in the power of expressing their thoughts in language which is at once simple and direct. In other words, while they may know all there is to be known about the purely mechanical side of the industry they serve, the social implications of this service are hid from them, and they possess an incomplete mastery of an instrument which is of more importance to them, whether as craftsmen or instructors, than any piece of machinery, namely the English language, the instrument of thought and of communication between man and man. And lacking these things, they find it difficult to appreciate the lack

of them in their students. The Board of Education have been in the habit, for some years past now, of organising courses of instruction for teachers in Evening and Technical Institutes. We submit that similar courses, somewhat on the lines set forth in Section 155 below, should prove of great value, if it were made clear from the outset that the instruction had a direct bearing upon the craft or industry concerned. The history and geography of the particular industry might form the centre of the course, while illustrative readings from appropriately selected literature would react helpfully upon the paper-work of those taking the course which would of course form an integral part of the whole. It is sufficient to mention the building trade, with its age-long history, its far-flung geographical connexions and the wealth of the literature attached to it,* to show what possibilities such a course would open up in the hands of an able teacher.

153. Apart from the hopeful signs indicated above, it is certain that in the long run English must become an ingredient in all technical and commercial courses for students between 16 and 18 years of age. The Education Act of 1918 does not as yet affect these ages but it will do so after the statutory interval of years has elapsed. The institution of compulsory part-time education for those over 16 will completely change the situation; it will turn the flank of the position in which the crude vocational desires of the students are at present entrenched. No doubt for those capable of profiting by it the education for these older continuation students will be predominantly technical; and rightly so. But unless the controlling authorities are very ill-advised, we can confidently expect that some humanistic instruction, including English, will be included in the courses taken. This inclusion is necessary, as we have shown, for vocational reasons, if for no other. A consideration of what is already being done in whole-time technical educa-

* *e.g.*, Ruskin, *Seven Lamps of Architecture, Stones of Venice, &c.*; William Morris, *Hopes and Fears for Art*; Carlyle, *Past and Present.*

tion will suggest the lines along which English humanism in compulsory part-time education for older students may be expected to proceed.

154. During the past decade a number of full-time technical schools, known as Junior Technical Schools, have sprung up in various parts of the country Their object is to prepare boys or girls for some particular trade, generally the engineering trade. The duration of the course varies from two to three years, and the students usually leave to take up their occupation at the age of 16. They are therefore younger than those of whom we have just been speaking. Nevertheless, the Continuation School, even in its last two years will have much to learn from a type of school for prospective wage-earners in which instruction is given whole-time for two years Normally six or seven hours a week are assigned to humane subjects in the Junior Technical School, these subjects being history, geography, literature, and composition. A lending library, such as we have described in Section 147, also plays an important part in schools of this type. There appears to be no reason why the English teaching in Junior Technical Schools should not be as excellent as that at Dartmouth Naval College, which though attended by boys of a different class is virtually itself a junior technical school. And in some of these schools we understand the level of the English teaching is high. The quality of the work, however, depends entirely upon the quality of the teacher, and good teachers will only be attracted by adequate remuneration and prospects of promotion. Unfortunately the salaries in Junior Technical Schools, in spite of the good example of some Authorities, are often poor, while, seeing that the headships of such schools are usually given to teachers with scientific qualifications, the English master has very little chance of promotion. We are, nevertheless, persuaded that these matters will be rectified without difficulty when once the authorities realise the importance of the humanities in technical education.

155. "Science," as one of our witnesses put it in a passage already quoted, "deals with the apparatus of life, as contrasted with people and ideas." The dictum is even truer of technology; since science at least deals with the conceptual apparatus, while technology is mainly concerned with an apparatus which is purely material. "The study of Mathematics or of Science," we have written in connection with Secondary Schools, "depends much less than do other studies upon the constant use of language and in consequence those who are specialising in them may, and often do, fail to achieve a command of English commensurate with the requirements of a liberal education"—or even, we may here add, of a vocational education. A training in the use of English, that is of the instrument of thought, is therefore of vital moment to technological students. Further, technology, more obviously perhaps than pure science, has its social implications. Its students are preparing themselves for a career, a career which involves the organisation of human agents as well as the control and understanding of machinery. A study of society, in particular of society in its economic aspects, is thus of only less moment to the technological student than the study of the language in which he speaks and thinks. Evidence upon this point was offered by Mr. Taylor, Director of Humanistic Studies at the Huddersfield Technical College. He said: "Two subjects at least should be embodied in all full technical courses, (i) English, (ii) Social and Industrial History. There is an intimate connection between these two. Industrial History helps to give the student an intelligent understanding of his social environment. It is only less potent than literature in developing imagination, and tends, properly handled, in the same direction, and, by giving a meaning to everyday things, aids self-expression. On this basis the student learns to express himself, both in writing and discussion, about the ordinary facts of life—which is one purpose in studying English. But even for technical students the best training in English is to be got from the study

of good literature under expert guidance. It is essential that each student should (i) read all the books studied in class (ii) discuss them in class (iii) periodically get his practice in composition by writing down his views and criticisms of what he has already read and discussed. To this, if time permits, might be added reading of plays in parts, or dramatic performance. This method of acquiring the art of self-expression has the further advantage of developing what ex-technical students—engineers, chemists, mill-managers —so often lack, imagination. The main point I desire to bring out is that the intelligent study of literature develops personality, and is valuable to anyone in any walk of life; for literature deals with life, of which weaving and chemical research are parts." What Mr. Taylor desires to see in all full-time technical courses is already operative in the best Junior Technical Schools. We see no reason why English and Industrial History should not become an integral part of courses for older students taking whole-time instruction in Technical Schools and Colleges.

156. That the humanities are for the most part absent at present from these courses is due partly to the pressure of vocational interests, unwisely interpreted, and partly to the fact that English, especially literature, as generally understood, appears to both the students and organisers of technical education to be very remote from their own pre-occupations. We believe that they are not without justification for this attitude.* The introduction of industrial history, particularly if the study of it be closely related to the industry in which the students for the time being are chiefly interested, will help to correct the balance. But English itself, even literature, can and should be given a vocational bias, can be made to bear directly upon the life and work of all those who study it, can, in short, be handled as an actuality of vital interest and with an intelligible purpose to everyone concerned. In this connection we desire to draw attention to an Ameri-

* *See* §§ 235–237.

can experiment which has, we understand, been attended with great success and which, in any event, deserves the close study of all those interested in technical education in this country. The experiment has been carried out by Mr. Frank Aydelotte, formerly a Rhodes scholar at the University of Oxford, and now Professor of English at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. The main point of his work and the chief cause of its success is that he begins with what his students have to give, he links his instruction on to their professional pride and their objects in life. But the method is best described in his own words:

"We do not teach 'engineering English' or 'business English' as those terms are generally understood. Instead we give our students, both in literature and composition, the best literary instruction we can, taking pains however at the beginning to give the men a chance to think out for themselves the importance in engineering education of the power of clear thinking and clear expression, and of the broad and human outlook which has always been recognised as the most important result of literary studies. We recognise frankly, it is true, that our students are engineers, that they desire, most of all, to attain success in engineering, that they are likely at the start to feel little interest in literature for its own sake, and that what they want in composition is to learn to write good business letters and engineering reports. But we do not assume that they will necessarily prefer a narrow success to a broad one, that just because they have chosen to be engineers, all things human are alien to their interests. We do not ask our students to be ashamed of being engineers, but we do ask them to be ashamed of being narrow, one-sided engineers. We try to make them see, what engineering students and still more teachers of engineering, are prone to forget, that the engineer is also a man. . . .

"In order that a student should have any clear ideas of the value of English to an engineer, it is first necessary

that he have a clear conception of what he means by engineering, and we begin by asking him this question. We follow up his answer with other questions. What is the difference between a trade and a profession? What is the meaning of the professional spirit? What should be the position of the engineer in society in this new era of the manufacture of power, that of mechanical, hired expert, or that of leader and adviser? Is the function of the engineer to direct only the material forces of nature or also human forces? Such questions readily arouse the interest of the students and bring on thoughtful discussion. The men are in earnest about their work and they are more than willing to think worthily of it. When we have thus brought out in class a number of points of view on these questions, we ask the students to read one of two essays on the subject by engineers. In order that this material may be available, we have reprinted in a convenient volume selections from the works of prominent engineers, scientists, and literary men of the 19th century. These selections are arranged under the following heads: 'Writing and Thinking,' 'The Engineering Profession,' 'Engineering and Education,' 'Pure Science and Applied,' 'Science and Literature,' and 'Literature and Life.'* These headings will suggest the problems we discuss and their order. The reading of the essays in each case arouses further discussion, to which we allow the utmost freedom. No orthodox point of view is prescribed; the student's own reason, not the opinion of his teacher or the pronouncement of his text, is the final authority. We do not try to urge the student into hasty, ill-considered judgments; our aim is to raise questions which it may take him half a lifetime to answer; our purpose is to give him a thoughtful outlook on life and his profession.

"Having discussed the question, What is engineering? we proceed to ask: What is the aim of engineering educa-

* The volume in question, which is entitled *English and Engineering* (London, The Hill Publishing Co., Ltd.) is an admirable prose anthology and should prove valuable to all who take an interest in technical education.

tion? What kind of education will produce the ideal engineer? What is the relation between power of memory and power of thought? Is there any connection between a broad and liberal point of view and capacity for leadership? What qualities do practical engineers value most highly in technical graduates? Again we follow the discussion of these and related topics by asking the student to read essays by engineers on these subjects—essays which will widen and stimulate his thought so as to give him a broad and true, rather than a false and narrow, conception of engineering education.

"Following the question, What is the aim of engineering education? comes naturally, What is the relation of pure science to applied? and following that, What is the relation of science to literature? Here again, in each case, after the preliminary discussion in class, we ask the students to read essays by those men who have the best right to speak about these things—Huxley, Tyndall, Arnold, Newman, for example. This material follows naturally the essays by engineers on engineering subjects. The students read it with the same keen interest, and in their written and oral discussion of what they have studied, they come to see for themselves the connection between engineering, with which they began, and literature, with which they end. . . .

"Literature approached in the manner described above becomes real to the student. His intellectual curiosity, his sense of wonder, is quickened. He realises that it is not a collection of historical facts, nor of critical opinions, not merely a number of more or less unintelligible 'classics' but instead, a body of live thought which relates to his own life and is of value to him in achieving his own ends—in defining the ends which he wishes to achieve. . . . Technical students bring to this work all the keenness which they have for their professional subjects. They find it at once liberal, in every fundamental sense of the term, and practical in every real sense of that. At the end of this, their first year's work, they have learned

something about writing from practice in the expression of real thought, and they have a deepened sense of the worth of their own profession and its place in the world, of its relation to those two great departments of thought, science and literature. They are ready to read poetry and fiction and drama with real human interest, ready to find in them something which they can relate to their own problems. It is surprising how many students, after such a course, express a desire to study philosophy and literature. They have a glimpse of the real function of literature—to unify life and to show men its meaning. . .

"If the engineer, who has created this new epoch of the manufacture of power, is to fulfil the promise made to society by his achievements hitherto, he must view society broadly; must address himself to the solution of its problems, which are human no less than material. In the education of this broad, liberal-minded engineer, which society so badly needs, the study of the mother-tongue must be more than the acquirement of facts or a superficial accomplishment; it must be a training in thought, the influence of which is to clarify and humanise the student's character and his aims in life." *

We have only one criticism to make upon this admirable statement of the problem and its solution, namely that, as we have already said, the teacher of the humanities in the technical school will be unwise to neglect the assistance, and centralising influence, which social and industrial history will undoubtedly give to his course.

157. No doubt Professor Aydelotte's task is rendered easier by the fact that he is dealing with University students, who have matriculated and have received at least some instruction in English at the Secondary School. Mr. Taylor, the witness we have already quoted, made a great point of the low standard of intellectual attainment at present expected from students entering the full-time courses at technical colleges. We are impressed by his

* The extracts are quoted from "The Problem of English in Engineering Schools," an essay in a little book entitled *The Oxford Stamp*: Oxford University Press, 1917.

evidence, and are of opinion that no college should admit full-time students before they have passed an appropriate entrance test, which should in all cases include an English paper. Candidates for Royal Scholarships and Free Studentships in Science have first to pass a qualifying examination in English before they are allowed to take the science papers. The principle is excellent, and might we think be readily applied to the purposes of the technical schools and colleges below University rank.

ENGLISH AND INDUSTRIAL EDUCATION.

158. In the general course of our inquiry it has been borne in upon us time and again that our educational system is too remote from life. Life, for the vast bulk of the population, consists mainly of commercial and industrial activities. Hitherto the best currents of educational thought and experiment, deriving from the time of the Renaissance, have either despised or ignored the commercial and industrial facts of the modern world. The result has been a cleavage, disastrous both for education and industry. Incidentally it has given rise to that thronged but ill-built structure, behind the main educational façade, known as technical education. Technical and commercial studies are, we recognise, essential to a very large number of young people in this country; they are founded upon the most simple and fundamental desires, the desire for bread, and for success in life. But by themselves they are not a complete education; and they do not even provide those who take them with all that they require for efficient bread-winning. We claim therefore that it is in the highest interests of the young student, the trade he seeks to serve and the nation at large that technical instruction should be supplemented and informed with the humanities—that it should become in other words technical education. We claim further that an English humanism, including the study of literature, of history and of the language as an instrument of thought and expression, if made actual by being brought closely into touch with the main preoccupations of the

students, might go far not only to ennoble the education of the industrial worker but also to bridge the gulf between industry and culture referred to above. Writing at the beginning of the 19th century, that great English poet who above all others understood the needs and aspirations of the common man declared that "if the labours of men of science should ever create any material revolution, direct or indirect, in our condition, and in the impressions which we habitually receive the Poet will sleep then no more than at present: he will be ready to follow the steps of the Man of Science, not only in those general indirect effects, but he will be at his side, carrying sensation into the midst of the objects of the science itself. The remotest discoveries of the Chemist, the Botanist, or Mineralogist, will be as proper objects of the Poet's art as any upon which it can be employed, if the time should ever come when these things shall be as familiar to us, and the relations under which they are contemplated by the followers of these respective sciences shall be manifestly and palpably material to us as enjoying and suffering beings. If the time should ever come when what is now called science, thus familiarised to men, shall be ready to put on, as it were, a form of flesh and blood, the Poet will lend his divine spirit to aid the transfiguration, and will welcome the being thus produced, as a dear and genuine inmate of the household of man." The material revolution "in our condition, and in the impressions we habitually receive" has taken place, as Wordsworth foresaw it would. That the rest of his prophecy remains unfulfilled is due to a lamentable breach between culture and the common life of man.* We believe that one of the means to salvation of this country is the healing of that breach. We declare that poetry and drama should be as free of the factory and the workshop as they were of the village green and moot-hall in the middle ages. And we look chiefly to a humanised industrial education to bring this about.

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* Compare §§ 232–238.

CHAPTER VI.

THE TRAINING OF TEACHERS.

159. The improvements in the teaching of English which we hope to see, can only be brought about through a steady influx of teachers whose own training in English has been liberally conceived and carried out. We have now to consider the means by which the provision of such teachers may be furthered.

The question is not merely one for the Training Colleges. Elementary Schools in England are very far from being staffed only by teachers who have been through a training college course, and the problem of the teaching of English is thereby greatly complicated. According to the returns of the Board of Education there were employed on March 31st 1920, in the Elementary Schools of England, 104,152 Certificated,* 30,259 Uncertificated, and 11,238 Supplementary Teachers. The proportion of Certificated Teachers is far lower if London and the great boroughs are not included. In London 98 per cent., in the County Boroughs 82 per cent. of the teachers are certificated. But in the Counties, with their numerous small schools, the proportion is only 54 per cent. For assistant teachers only, the figures are much more striking. In the Counties, only 38 per cent. of the assistants are certificated. In Oxfordshire, an extreme case, there are more than two Uncertificated and nearly three Supplementary Teachers for every Certificated Assistant. To give detailed figures for a single County with both an urban and a rural population, there were employed in Essex on March 31st 1920, 909 Certificated Teachers (524 being Head Teachers), 514 Uncertificated and 356 Supplementary Teachers.

* Trained and Untrained; *see* § 165.

160. From Supplementary Teachers no examination qualifications are required, but if they prove in practice unfit for their work the Board of Education may demand their removal. They are employed chiefly to teach infants, and under the Board's regulations, which had to be relaxed during the war, they may only teach an Infants' class in a rural school or the lowest class of older scholars in a rural school with an attendance not above 100.

Uncertificated Teachers must have passed an examination qualifying them for admission to a Training College, but the standard required in English, as we shall show later, is a low one. Those who have passed the Preliminary Certificate Examination of the Board of Education will have been tested in reading but only very serious disability in speaking and reading would have disqualified them. Those who have taken alternative examinations, such as the Oxford or Cambridge Senior Locals, will not have undergone any such test.

161. We are aware that the Board of Education have constantly endeavoured to reduce the proportion of unqualified or partly qualified teachers in the Elementary Schools, and are continuing to do so. But owing to the shortage of teachers, it seems unlikely that rapid progress can be made in this direction in the near future, and it must be remembered that there will be a further drain on the teaching resources of the country when the Education Act of 1918 is fully in operation. In a circular recently addressed to the Local Education Authorities the Board state that "the position is very critical," and that "the present standard of efficiency in the public system of education is seriously threatened."

In the face of this difficulty we must recognise that however desirable it may be that the Elementary Schools should be staffed throughout by teachers whose competence has been adequately tested it cannot become an accomplished fact for some time to come, at any rate so far as the County areas are concerned. For English

this is a particularly serious matter. However, while refusing to suggest acquiescence in the present position, we seem bound to accept it for the time being and to seek what means of mitigation may be found.

162. The Board may require as a condition of the employment of Supplementary Teachers that suitable provision is made for enabling them to prepare and improve themselves for the practical work of teaching. One of the best ways of fulfilling this condition will be, we think, through classes which will bring them together for reading and for English studies. When they fail to do justice to the children entrusted to them it is not necessarily through lack of native ablility and certainly not, as a rule, through any lack of good will. It is mainly because their education is so defective and their outlook so narrow that they cannot even realise what they ought to be aiming at, much less carry it out. Many of them have had no further education since they left school at 13, and frequently they are back again as teachers in the same school in which they were pupils. Their home environment is seldom helpful. Some of them no doubt have never in their lives come into contact with a really cultivated and active mind. They can do but little for themselves without personal help and guidance, but they respond very soon to stimulating instruction and prove capable of making rapid and gratifying progress. Training in clear and correct speech and in reading aloud are essential to them, and it is most important that their instructor should be able to lead them to express themselves and to take part in discussion freely, and thereby both to train their intelligence and to reveal to them the secrets of oral teaching. But over and above this, everything possible should be done to bring them under the humanising influence of good books.

163. Only a small minority of Supplementary Teachers have been pupils at Secondary Schools. They are concerned, as we have said, with the younger children, and if they are not proficient in such subjects as Arithmetic

and History, not much harm is done. But English as we have already pointed out,* cannot wait; it is of the utmost importance that it should be effectively taught in the Infant classes, and in the lower classes of older children. It is from Supplementary Teachers that a large number of the children in the country schools of England first learn to pronounce English, to read it, to write it, and to express themselves in it. We think it of the greatest importance that Local Education Authorities should take all possible steps towards fitting these teachers for this important work.

It need not be feared that the provision of classes for this purpose will tend to establish permanently a large body of Supplementary Teachers. With a wider outlook, a fresh interest in their work and a consciousness of increased power, they will gain a sense of professional pride and a legitimate ambition to become duly qualified.

164. The number of Uncertificated Teachers will, we anticipate, gradually diminish. Few among the younger generation of teachers will be content to remain uncertificated indefinitely. We refer later to the special opportunities which Local Education Authorities can provide† for maintaining and renewing the intellectual interests of the teachers in their areas.‡ Teachers of all types will participate in them, but to Uncertificated Teachers they should be specially valuable. We do not wish to distinguish too sharply between different classes of teachers. English is the last subject in which the actual merits of teachers can be ascertained from their record on paper. There are many Uncertificated Teachers who are good teachers of English, just as there are Certificated Teachers who are not. But speaking generally it may be assumed that those who have received neither training nor advanced education are at a disadvantage as regards English. Unless this disadvantage can be got over it must be passed on to the children.

* Chapter III., § 65. † § 189.
‡ *See also* Chapter VIII., English and Adult Education.

165. A certain proportion of Certificated Teachers have not attended a Training College, but have passed the "Certificate Examination," held annually by the Board of Education.* Candidates for this examination must be already qualified for recognition as Uncertificated Teachers. They prepare themselves for it as best they can; usually by means of correspondence classes. A very small number who have not already been employed in Elementary Schools are tested in reading. For the others the only test in reading required is "that they should not have been reported on unfavourably by H.M. Inspector in Reading and Practical Teaching." Difficulties, no doubt, lie in the way of ensuring that every teacher possessing the hall mark of the certificate can read aloud in such a way as to provide a good model for his pupils. But we must record our opinion that the treatment of tests in reading is at present too casual and too partial for so important a subject.

166. We pass to the consideration of the courses provided by the Training Colleges.† Every teacher, we have said, must be a teacher of English. But we have been told very definitely by Training College witnesses that numbers of students arrive at College ill found in respect of English, and that this applies to pupils from Secondary Schools as well as to rural pupil teachers. Such students are said to be not only without a taste for reading, but defective in capacity for using or understanding English, as well as ill-trained, it may be, in speech and in reading aloud. To the question: "What proportion of the students who pass from College with Certificates every year are really qualified to take English with a class?" the answer given by the English Section of the Training College Association was: "Certainly not more than one-third." The following are representative

* The number who passed the Certificate Examination during the four years 1916–1919 varied from 384 in 1917 to 463 in 1919.

† There are at present 90 Training Colleges in England and Wales, including some for ex-soldiers, of a temporary kind. Twenty are Departments of Universities, or of University Colleges.

extracts from the oral evidence of the Training College Association witnesses. "Less than half the students when they came up were able to read respectably, and they could not even pronounce words correctly.' "Reading aloud was improving and was more natural than it used to be. Tales for children they read quite well, but in the case, *e.g.*, of a newspaper article they soon got out of their depth and then read abominably." "They attended not to what they read but to the art of reading. Though ignorant of the meaning of the words, they had learnt to modulate their voices in the most artful manner, which at first was most deceptive." "Their reading was better than their writing, and they could read poetry better than prose. They failed in writing because they had nothing to say." "Considering that the students were 18 years old, the writing both in matter and style was usually poor and there were few who had any love for reading." "They were more defective in composition than in reading. They made elementary faults in a simple sentence, they had not the power of putting things together logically, but the root evil was they had nothing to say." A Training College witness also stated: "Among all the women students who have entered this College this year not one, according to her written statement, is fond of reading books: very few read anything but novels." "Only seldom," said a University College witness, "were the students when they came to the Training College capable of expressing themselves in English. Their punctuation was very poor, and they showed no appreciation of balance and rhythm, style or form. The standard was also deplorably bad in the case of students taking University degrees."

167. In explanation of this weakness in English, it was stated that in some Colleges the students were far from representative of the abler Secondary School pupils, but were mostly average or even below average Form V scholars, perhaps from very uncultivated homes. But a

witness of wide experience who said that not more than 20 per cent of the students could be called "hopeful" as teachers of English added "but that was not because the material was hopeless. More should be done for them, and long before the Training College stage."

Two other points put before us were :—

(i) The lowness of the standard in English in some of the qualifying examinations accepted by the Board for entrance to a Training College. The English Section of the Training College Association emphasised this strongly We note also that the Board of Education Report for 1920, speaking of the results in English of the Preliminary Certificate Examination, states that "taking as the standard the work which can reasonably be expected from young persons of fair ability who have been properly educated up to the age of 17 the results were very poor. Sensible, thoughtful, and well-expressed essays were very scarce."

(ii) The effect of the Student-Teacher system. Where that system is adopted, a year or more of elementary school teaching, for at least seven school meetings weekly, intervenes between the student's own secondary school education and his college course. The Board require that arrangements for the training of Student-Teachers must provide for the continuance of their education, either by attendance at a Secondary School for one or more meetings in each week, or in some other way; but from the point of view of the Secondary Schools, Student-Teachers are anomalous folk for whom it is very difficult to make satisfactory provision. A responsible witness stated that "the interruption of study due to the Student-Teacher year did untold harm especially in English," and it has been strongly represented to us by other witnesses that whatever advantage students may derive from this early technical experience, it breaks the course of their mental development and tends to dissipate the results of their previous education.

168. With regard to the two questions here raised, our opinion is as follows. First, we think that the standard in English required for admission to Training Colleges is too low and that it is desirable that it should be raised whenever a change in this direction would not seriously interfere with the supply of entrants. This reform, we confidently anticipate, will be made possible by steady progress in the teaching in the Secondary and Elementary Schools. Secondly, we regard the interruption due to the student-teacher year as very regrettable. The students' greatest need at this period of their lives is that what they have gained at the Secondary School should be consolidated and confirmed, and vocational training should not be allowed to interfere with their receiving a full secondary school education.

169. Meanwhile we repeat the statement of the English Section of the Training College Association, that of the students who pass from College with Certificates every year, "certainly not more than one-third" are really qualified to teach English with a class. If this is so, what can the Training Colleges do to secure improvement?

If so many students arrive at College weak in English their weakness must be vigorously dealt with there. A University Training College witness said "at the University College it was too late to teach people to write." But we cannot admit that when students have failed to lay a sound foundation of English during their school days their loss must be treated as irreparable. It is necessary to start from the point which they have actually reached, not the one which they ought to have reached. If they cannot learn to express themselves clearly and correctly in English, they are unfit to become teachers at all.

170. The Board's new Regulations for the Training of Teachers* help to simplify the problem before us. They have modified the course of study considerably, reducing the number of subjects required with a view to rendering

* Dated July 26, 1920.

more time available for professional work, or for work of a high standard in any one subject. The number of subjects which students must take as part of their general education is reduced to four or five as compared with six or seven previously required. And of the six more general subjects—English, History, Geography, Mathematics, Science and French—only two must necessarily be selected, of which one, it is stated, should be English. The paramount importance of English is thus very markedly emphasised; it is indeed regarded, as we claim that it should be regarded, as the basis of a liberal education, and an excellent opportunity is now afforded to the Training Colleges of demonstrating its fitness for that position.

171. We proceed to consider the Syllabus in English for the Board of Education's Final Examination of students in Training Colleges.* It varies from time to time, and the present syllabus was only examined on for the first time in 1919. An essay is required, but apart from that the course is purely literary, and the examination tests demand no knowledge of linguistics or of the history of literature, but call for intelligent and appreciative reading of the books prescribed. There is an Advanced Course,† intended for those who show special aptitude for the study of English, but the Ordinary Course is the one taken by a large majority of the students.‡

No reference is made in the English Syllabus to Reading and Recitation, or to Phonetics. These appear, however, under the heading "Professional Subjects," where it is stated that "students will be required to read aloud passages from the books prescribed for general and detailed study under the head of English," and that "passages from standard English authors should be learned by heart." The teaching should also include "such a

* In 1920 the Ordinary Course was taken by 2,797 students, of whom 427 passed with credit.

† This is, of course, distinct from the Advanced Courses in Secondary Schools, described in Chapter IV., § 119.

‡ Alternative Courses may be submitted; *see* § 177.

knowledge of Elementary Practical Phonetics as will enable the students to analyse and classify the sounds of spoken English, and to explain the mechanism of their production in terms suitable for teaching children how to speak and read distinctly."

172. The distinction between "general" and "professional," subjects is bound to be somewhat difficult to define. Such subjects as History, Geography and Arithmetic, which were regarded at the time of the Newcastle report merely as "subjects intended to increase directly the professional skill of the students" have long figured in the Regulations as "general" subjects. In the 1920 Regulations already referred to, Singing, Drawing and Needlework have been newly promoted from the category of professional to that of general subjects. Reading and Recitation, however, no longer appear as separate subjects, being absorbed into "The Principles and Practice of Teaching." We understand that the existing arrangements are by no means intended to minimise the importance of Reading and Recitation, but that, on the contrary, their aim is to facilitate the testing of all students in spoken English. We fear, nevertheless, that a wrong impression may sometimes be created by the non-appearance of these subjects in the English Syllabus, and we think it desirable that the Syllabus should indicate that Reading, Recitation and Phonetics are essential features of the study of English.

173. Our witnesses are agreed in emphasising the need for a better standard in reading than is at present obtained, though we are satisfied that in many Colleges much improvement has been effected in recent years, especially by means of dramatic work. In these matters of reading and speech the Colleges are at present often called upon to do work which should have been done in the Elementary School, and in the Secondary School or Pupil Teachers' Class. We have already called attention, when discussing the Elementary Schools, to the disproportion which exists in them between the amount of time devoted to

reading aloud and the results achieved. This we attribute partly to the size of the classes and partly to the frequent failure of the teacher to set a high standard in his own practice. Ability to read well should be placed in the forefront of the qualifications to be expected in a teacher. He cannot teach his pupils to read aloud better than he can himself. The teacher of literature, in particular, must be highly competent as a reader. Literature, especially poetry and the drama, exerts a more potent influence when it is read aloud. Much of the appeal which it makes to children is dependent upon beauty of sound, and unless the teacher can express this in his delivery, it will not succeed in making this appeal.

174. Phonetics and speech training, again, receive considerable attention in certain Colleges, but, speaking generally, they are only occasionally and unsystematically dealt with. Good lecturers in phonetics are not yet easy to obtain: in the meantime something might perhaps be accomplished by means of peripatetic teachers. Vacation courses organised by the Board of Education have done much good, and we should be glad to see them still further developed. Mr. Daniel Jones, who has for many years given courses in English phonetics at University College to L.C.C. teachers, is of opinion that the students should have an hour's training weekly during the two years' Course. Miss Fogerty, who has a long experience in speech training, thought they should have weekly lessons, totalling not less than 60 hours, during the College course. This, Mr. Jones informed us, is the amount of time actually given to speech training in Training Colleges in Scotland. Mrs. Dowson also thought that about an hour weekly during the two years' Course was needed. We endorse their recommendations and we think that during part of the time the students should be instructed in small groups.

175. Our first point then is that much more attention should be paid to spoken English. The time allotted to oral work might well be doubled or trebled. Miss

Hawtrey stated in her evidence that "all the oral work —*i.e.*, story telling, acting, reading, &c.,—she would take together, and it should amount to quite a third of the students' training in English." The cultivation of the voice, guidance in the art of story-telling, instruction in recitation and reading aloud are all-important for that English teaching which all teachers are called upon to give. The voice of the teacher is his main instrument, the only model which his pupils will have to follow, and too much attention cannot be paid to it. Here we should like to call attention to the memorandum, submitted by the British Drama League to the Board of Education, on study in Dramatic Method in Training Colleges, and in particular to the recommendation of training in voice and diction, and practical dramatic work in relation to the literary curriculum, in which we heartily concur. The study of literature also would benefit greatly by more stress being laid upon oral work. That nice adjustment between the choice of material and the individual tastes and powers of the students which may be regarded as the essence of the right presentation of literature depends upon skilful oral teaching. In oral work the lecturer would naturally make frequent use of poetry, and the poem would be chosen to suit the reader or reciter. There would be much discussion as to the way a poem should be delivered; poetry would be treated as something rather to be heard and spoken than to be studied. And though the students might learn less *about* literature it may well be that a larger proportion of them would gain some conception of what literature *is*.

176. It follows necessarily from these recommendations that an oral test should form an essential part of the examination in English. In no other way could the effectiveness of the oral teaching be ascertained. The examiner would hear the students read and recite, and would see for himself and take into account the value of any practical dramatic work done, and he would be

able, by questioning individual students, to form a far more just opinion of how far they had really been educated and how far they were likely to prove successful as teachers of English than could be gained from a written examination alone.*

We also recommend the inclusion of a compulsory "language" test. It seems clear to us, from the evidence which we have heard, that it is necessary, in present circumstances, to draw a sharp distinction between "expression" and "literature" and to concentrate upon the average student's expression, both oral and written. His reading should aim less at getting up the contents of particular books and more at obtaining a mastery of expression in English. From this point of view literature would be a means rather than an end in itself. A set essay might or might not be required, but the test should certainly not be limited to a set essay. Its object would be to test power of understanding English, of lucid thinking and of precise expression. In connection with the language test we assume that books would be chosen from the great masters of English style for all students to study, questions on them being directed to showing not whether they had been memorized, but whether they had been fully comprehended. We deal later† with examinations in English, and with the forms which such a language test may take. Of any examination in English for Ordinary Course students it should, we think, with the oral test, form the predominating part.

THE ORDINARY COURSE.

177. In the Ordinary Course two plays of Shakespeare must be read, and in one of them the meaning of the text should be studied in detail. For general reading fifteen books are included, but students are not expected to answer questions on more than five. Eight of the fifteen

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* *See also* § 283.

† *See* §§ 269, 272–274.

books are novels, and not more than two of the five questions attempted may refer to these Of the remaining seven books three are poetry (an anthology, selections from Browning and selections from Tennyson) and four are prose, the authors being Burke, De Quincey, Carlyle and Stevenson.

It remains for us to define our attitude to the system which obtains, as a rule, at present; that is to say, an examination on this syllabus of set books. We say "as a rule," because the actual Ordinary Course Syllabus is not compulsory. The Colleges may, with the approval of the Board, take alternative examinations of their own, and alternative courses of study leading up to them. But only about one-third of them take advantage of this permission.

178. Should English Literature be a compulsory subject for all Training College students? To this question we have given a great deal of time and consideration. The witnesses who represented the Training College Association informed us that the English Section of the Association answered "yes" by a large majority; but it was doubtful, they added, what answer would be given by the Association as a whole, though probably a majority would agree with the English Section. The six witnesses who represented the Association appeared to be equally divided on the question. Miss Mercier said that "if History were treated not merely as a record of deeds but as the revelation of man, and of his thoughts and attempts to express himself, it would form the basis of the type of education usually associated with the study of literature. There were students whose bent was towards History rather than Literature, and if they could obtain training of the type desired from a wider study of History she saw no reason why they should not so obtain it. She did not want a course in knowledge of historical facts; a humane training must be aimed at, and in such a History scheme as she desired, English Literature would have an essential place." Two of the other witnesses

representing the Association agreed with Miss Mercier, but the remaining two doubted whether the writing of English could be properly taught without careful study of the great masters of literature.

Some additional witnesses who spoke for the Training Colleges emphasised the danger of making English literature a compulsory subject. Thus Miss Hawtrey thought "that every teacher should be able to teach English from the utilitarian point of view, but not everyone had a strong artistic feeling, and an art could not be taught by compulsion, whether music or drawing or painting or dancing or poetry, or prose, in its imaginative and poetical sense."

Mr. Cape, H.M.I., thought that "for certain students History, in connection with which a certain amount of Literature would have to be read, might be substituted for English Literature proper. However true, in general, it might be that the study of English literature was the best of all means of educating the mind and character, and of acquiring the power to teach the language, he could not ignore the representations so often made to him by Training College lecturers that some of the students could not be made to feel any interest in English literature: he thought, therefore, that they might be allowed to take up something else in which they could feel an interest."

179. Those on the other hand who were in favour of compulsory literature urged that no student, especially under the modified regulations, should be unable to find time to read the minimum required for the Ordinary Course, or should suffer hardship in being required to do so. It was pointed out that the regulations are really very elastic. Should any student desire to do so, he might steer clear of poetry altogether in the examination; or again, if he answered questions on all the poetical books, he might ignore all prose other than the novel. The following arguments have also been placed before us by witnesses.

(i) It is possible to attach far too much importance to the apparent inclination of the students at the beginning of their College course. The dislike for literature which some of them express may be a mere prejudice, due perhaps to the way in which it has been placed before them. Not only do they know little of literature but they know little of themselves. Many who have no taste for literature at the outset come under its spell during their Training College career, and are ultimately grateful for the compulsion which made readers of them. To do away with the Ordinary Course examination, *i.e.*, to cease to hold an examination on set books, would seriously lessen the attention paid to literature in the Colleges. An examination affords a stimulus for which no substitute can be found.

(ii) Too much importance, again, may be attached to the charge often brought against the examination of putting a premium on cramming and insincerity. As a rule the papers demand only the most elementary literary criticism, but aim at finding out whether the books set have really been read, and read intelligently. The questions, in fact, are of just the same type as those which the lecturers themselves would necessarily deal with in the course of their teaching if there were no examination at all. To retail a quantity of ill digested appreciation is the last thing that the examiners want the students to do, or give them credit for doing. In any event the introduction of an oral test would minimize the danger of insincerity remaining undetected and would redress the balance in favour of those to whom culture is something more than merely getting up certain subjects.

(iii) The hurried methods of study which have led to faulty work in the past, should no longer be necessary. Under the new regulations there should be time both for the Ordinary Course in Literature and for adequate training in writing and in the other branches of English.

180. We think that the needs of a large number of the students who now take the Ordinary Course are not

best met by an examination on a compulsory syllabus of set books in literature. One important reason for our view is this: we strongly dissent from the idea, sometimes used as an argument for compulsory literature, that all teachers should study literature because all will have to teach it. All teachers, we have said, must be teachers of English, but by this we mean that all must be teachers of expression in English, not necessarily of literature. We had rather literature were not taught at all than that its presentation should be entrusted to teachers who do not believe in it. An examination on the content of the students' reading is, however, desirable; but it should be designed on wider lines than the Ordinary Course Examination, in order to make due allowance for variety of tastes and interests. Such a recommendation appears to us to be in no way inconsistent with the existing regulations of the Board. The Colleges, as we have pointed out, have full opportunity to submit alternative proposals, both as regards the course of study to be followed in particular subjects and as regards the whole scope of the examination.* We desire to encourage initiative and enterprise on their part in availing themselves of these opportunities. It is desirable that they should put their ideas to the test, and that plenty of experiments should be tried.

181. Alternative schemes would, of course, deal with the whole of the course in English, and would, we hope, be designed in such a way as to afford time and opportunity for English teaching of the kind which we have already described, and for all methods of study which may contribute to the true appreciation of literature. They would, for instance, provide for making good that lack of mental background which leads to so much misapprehension of literature, or perhaps for encouraging creative efforts in prose and verse on the part of the students with a view to developing their literary sensibility, or the reading of contemporary literature which may prove a

* Regulations for the Training of Teachers, Arts. 40 (*d*) and 44 (*a*).

far easier means of approach to the minds of the students than the reading of the older English classics. Some Colleges might find their requirements best met by an examination by no means confined to literature, but designed somewhat on the lines of the paper on "Contemporary Subjects" proposed for the Civil Service Class I. Examination,* in which opportunity would be given to students to show the nature and extent of their reading in whatever direction. We have no wish to penalize the student who prefers to read for information rather than for any æsthetic motive. Nor should the student be encouraged to draw a sharp distinction between reading which is likely to be useful from the examination point of view and reading which is not. It is desirable to take into account the considerable number of students who are keenly interested in various aspects of life; social, political, scientific, philosophical, historical and so forth, and who are willing to read widely on such matters, but in whom æsthetic capacity is lacking or undeveloped. This is not uncommon among the men; they will sometimes become keenly interested, *e.g.*, in Burke, who makes less appeal to women students. We see no need to force them from their natural bent in order to compel them to study a prescribed course of literature. Compulsion which interferes with their real interests will only antagonise them. A course of reading more in accordance with their tastes might perhaps be arranged for them. Authors rather than books would probably be prescribed. Many students will be sure to arrive at an interest in literature through their interest in life; Browning's popularity in the Colleges is due no doubt to the spiritual problems which he raises. The lecturer may like to make extensive use of the drama, as has been done in an interesting scheme sent to us by a particular College. He may also be able to introduce a good deal of literature in connection with

* *See* Appendix B. of Report of Treasury Committee on the Scheme of Examination for Class I. of the Civil Service.

reading on historical and other subjects. But he would remain free to use his own judgment as to how and when literature should be introduced.

THE ADVANCED COURSE.

182. Many of the students who take the Ordinary Course are no doubt proficient in the use of English, and have a real appreciation of literature, but have preferred to do their advanced work in other subjects. Some of them may ultimately do excellent service in the cause of English teaching. But we hope that as, through improved teaching of English in the schools, a conscious inclination towards the study of literature becomes more general, a greatly increased number of students will take the Advanced Course.* This would then become the recognised Course for all who desire to make some definite study of English literature, the Ordinary Course taking on, as we have suggested, a less exclusively literary character.

The Advanced Course, as at present planned, admits of much freedom of choice. Moreover, alternative courses of study may, with the approval of the Board, be adopted, and in several cases this approval has, we understand, already been given. But in two respects some further development of the course appears to us to be a necessary corollary of the increased weight which the regulations now accord to English as an educational subject. First, we would urge strongly the necessity for reading outside the prescribed scheme. The students' power to appreciate literature would be increased by some reading in other fields which would add to the background of knowledge in their minds. Much will depend on their other subjects of study. In particular, those who do not take History should do some reading in the works of the great historical writers. We do not wish to

* The Advanced Course was taken in 1920 by 860 students, of whom 70 obtained Distinction.

press this point over much, or to propose that what is essentially a course in literature should be seriously diluted. On the other hand, a study, *e.g.*, of the Romantic Revival of English Poetry (one of the alternative schemes allowed in the syllabus) would lose much of its value without some concurrent study of the relevant history.

Secondly, we should like to see some definite recognition of the study of contemporary literature. No living author is named in the syllabus and probably the omission of names is judicious, but we think that the students are far more likely to perceive in literature not merely a school subject but the most direct communication of experience by man to men if they are encouraged to find out how the life of their own time has been interpreted by contemporary writers.

183. The above suggestions may not harmonize well with a syllabus in which the particular books to be read are officially prescribed, and it appears to us that the tendency should be for the framing of syllabuses, together with the conduct of examinations, to pass more and more into the hands of the College authorities who would be able to take into account the needs and propensities of each student. Alternative College examinations must as a rule be conducted by a Joint Examining Body constituted in accordance with a Scheme approved by the Board, and on such an Examining Body external Examiners approved by the Board must be included. This condition may, we hope, serve as an opportunity whereby men of recognised mark in English scholarship or letters may get into touch, in the capacity of examiners, with the work which is being done by the Colleges, and so help to bring about a closer relationship between scholars and creative artists on the one hand and students and teachers on the other, to the advantage of both.

We think that the Final Examination, even of advanced students, should always include a language paper containing a definite test of their power to follow and explain a set passage of English, together with ques-

tions designed to test their ability to use English in a workmanlike way and to appreciate qualities of style. We also emphasize the special importance of an oral test for Advanced Course students. It is, we consider, essential as the best means of counteracting those dangers to which, as we indicate elsewhere,* examinations in literature are peculiarly liable.

THIRD YEAR COURSES.

184. There will, we hope, be an increase in the number of students making a special study of English in a Third Year Course at College. The regulations permit certain students who have satisfactorily completed a two years' course to be recognised for a third year's course of training, which should provide for the special study of one or more subjects forming part of the ordinary curriculum of Elementary Schools. This appears to us to afford an excellent opportunity to selected students for making a special study of English, and it is very desirable that the Colleges should consider the question of how such courses can best be planned and arranged for. In London, as for instance at Furzedown Training College, students who take a third year of training and wish to specialize in English can work for the Diploma in English Literature of the University of London, and can take a one year's course of intensive study in preparation for it at King's College.

DEGREE COURSES.

185. We have dealt so far with the normal Training College Course, and with the examinations for which it forms a preparation. We have, however, expressed the opinion that it is a vital necessity for the nation that in its Universities adequate room should always be available for those who are to be engaged in the work of

* *See* §§ 275, 282, 283.

education, and we welcome the increased interest which the Universities are now showing in the training of teachers. At present, we are informed, Departments for the Training of Teachers are recognised in all the English and Welsh Universities and University Colleges, save that of Durham. These Departments usually have two sides, Secondary and Elementary, but the distinction between the two is in practice much blurred. Students nominally in the Secondary Department practise to some extent in Elementary Schools, and *vice versâ*. But the great majority of the students, to whichever Department attached, aim at obtaining, and do in fact obtain, posts in Secondary Schools.

The normal procedure in University Training Departments is for the students to devote three years to work for a degree, very little time being spent upon "professional" work till the fourth year, which is wholly devoted to it. All Arts students must take English in the Intermediate Examination, but students taking a Science Degree usually do no English after Matriculation. A fair proportion, especially among the women, offer English either as a principal or subsidiary subject in their Final Examination.

On entering the fourth, or professional, year the students are, of course, all graduates. A good deal of the theoretical portion of the course is common to all of them, but each Training Department has Courses of Special Method, for which the students are divided into groups according to the subject in the teaching of which they are most interested. One such Course is always on English. Some Departments give all the students the opportunity of learning something of the method of teaching English, and, where the staff is large, one of the tutors, specially qualified for the purpose, is responsible for conducting the lectures and discussions thereupon. In several Departments members of the academic staff of the University have assisted in the Courses on the special method of teaching English,

and have also taken a share in supervising the English students in their school practice. But in others the academic staff display no interest in the teaching of their own subject, whether it be English or another.

Students who have taken Honours are expected to specialise in the teaching of one subject. They are usually placed in Secondary Schools where they are enabled to witness good lessons in their subject, and, as confidence comes, to teach it themselves. At Cambridge, for instance, students who wish to be specially trained in English teaching are placed under the personal supervision of the chief English Master at the Perse School, and are virtually "trained" by him.

Those who, for various reasons must practise mostly in Elementary Schools have not quite the same advantages. But here, too, the future English teacher is given as much opportunity of practice in various classes as possible; and this in effect amounts to a good deal. At Leeds University, for instance, an excellent course of practice in teaching English and allied subjects has been arranged for Arts students, and in the course for Science students some English is included.

186. Conditions such as these are calculated to produce, and do produce, admirable teachers both of English and of other subjects; and only under such conditions, as we have already said, can teachers be fully grounded and confirmed in the idea of a liberal education. But we regret that so few of the teachers thus trained find their way into the Elementary Schools, and we look forward to a time when a really large proportion of our elementary school teachers will be persons who have completed a full University training. For the great majority of students only two years, unfortunately, are at present available. Individual Two Year Students may, however, be allowed, under the Board's Regulations, to enter for suitable University Examinations forming recognised stages in courses for Degrees, such examinations being regarded as alternative to the Board's Final

Examination. We look with some suspicion, especially from the point of view of adequate training in English, at the attempt to compress within so limited a period as two years both a "Degree Course" and a professional training. The conditions under which the work must be done seem liable to produce that mental distraction which we have spoken of earlier as one of the dangers of education to-day. The University Examination most frequently taken at the end of two years is the London University Intermediate Arts, and several witnesses referred to the excessive strain to which the students were thereby subjected. It was pointed out that under the Regulations for External Students, London Intermediate candidates took English Literature and Essay, Latin (with Roman History), French, Mathematics and a fifth subject, probably History or Botany or Chemistry. Simultaneously the professional subjects, such as the Principles of Teaching, Hygiene, and the Theory of Physical Training must be studied, and from six to twelve weeks given to practice in teaching, and in addition one or more subjects selected from Music, Drawing, Handwork, and (in the case of women) Needlework, must be taken. Some of the students broke down, we were told, through the strain of academic and professional study combined with teaching and, perhaps, with railway travelling. The English Syllabus of the London Intermediate Examination, which was criticised by several Training College witnesses, has, since we received their evidence, been entirely recast. But we can imagine few things less likely to promote a profitable study of English Literature than to expect students to prepare for an examination under conditions similar to those above described. The proviso in the Board's Regulations that students following Degree Courses must abandon them if their health proves insufficient to allow them to support the extra strain placed upon them also seems of rather sinister import. We are unable to resist the impression that Two Year Students who enter for University Examina-

tions forming recognised stages in courses for degrees are often at a disadvantage, from the point of view of their English studies, compared with those who take the Board's Final Examination, or an Alternative College Examination.

TRAINING COLLEGE LECTURERS.

187. We have left till last what is really the most important point of all. Upon the Training College lecturers, more than upon any other group of persons, the well-being of the whole system of elementary education depends. In the schools other matters sink into insignificance in comparison with the provision of good teachers; it is to the skill, scholarship and personality of the lecturers that we must look for this provision. If English is to be successfully dealt with in the Training Colleges the lectureships must be made attractive enough to secure persons of the highest attainments and teaching gifts. It is not easy to prescribe the best means of achieving this end, but certain obstacles are sufficiently plain. Salaries in many Training Colleges at present compare most unfavourably with the recently improved salaries in Secondary Schools. Again, while the appointments to the headships of these schools are restricted almost exclusively to members of school staffs, the headships of Training Colleges are often filled from other branches of the profession; hence a teacher quitting a Secondary School for a Training College may sacrifice most of his chances of promotion. It has also been suggested to us that arrangements might be made for periodical interchange of posts between lecturers in different colleges, who would thus obtain the stimulus of fresh surroundings and conditions. Finally, public opinion seems never to have fully recognised the real scope and interest, as well as the far-reaching importance, of work in Training Colleges. "The shortness of the course and the quality of the material were unattractive," said a witness, "to those who looked at the work from an intellectual point of

view. Yet the work was more exacting than that of a University Professor." For such reasons as these, so it appears to us, many teachers who might give services of the greatest value have never seriously contemplated entering this part of the educational field. Anything which tended to the removal of these disadvantages would render the whole life of a Training College more attractive, and therefore necessarily tend to secure a higher class of teacher of English.

COURSES FOR TEACHERS.

188. But even when the Training College course has long been left behind, and teachers are engaged upon their life's work, much may still be done to increase efficiency and kindle enthusiasm, and thus lift the teaching of English to a higher level. Teachers cannot indefinitely be giving of their best without replenishing their own store. Stimulus and encouragement from outside are needed. There are various ways in which these may be given. Here, for instance, is a splendid field for the voluntary effort which we have suggested in our Introduction.* In the great towns, as we point out in Chapter VIII., there are indeed many classes and courses which teachers can attend : in London particularly, the resources of the University, reinforced with the assistance of many outside men of letters, have been placed at the disposal of the teachers with most beneficial results. But the case of the rural teacher is very different. In July of 1920, however, the Board of Education organised a course at Oxford for rural elementary school head teachers at which lectures were given by a number of distinguished men of letters. Professor Elton, who conducted the course, reports as follows :—" I had the pleasure of lecturing to 50 of the students in the July course at Balliol, and also of often meeting and talking with them. No one could ask for a better audience.

* Chapter I., § 17.

They knew comparatively little of the topic of discourse, but were keenly attentive and most industrious, bringing mature minds to the work. Their questions and exercises showed that they would try to pursue the study in earnest. I would add, as one coming from the outside, that the whole experiment of the summer course struck me as happy and successful, and as one which it would be a thousand pities not to repeat. . . . Whatever definite instruction they may have carried away they at least acquired new friends, also some new horizons; and so did we."

189. We agree with Professor Elton in hoping that this experiment may be repeated, and we are satisfied that Local Education Authorities would find themselves well repaid, by the increased vitality of the teaching in their schools, for the organisation of classes on similar lines. Only a limited number of teachers can have the privilege of attending such a course as the one mentioned above, but several of these should be able, on returning to their own sphere of work, to pass on to others some of the stimulus and fresh ideas which they have received. In various other subjects, such as Geography, Physical Exercises and Handicraft, teachers who have had special opportunities have done much to assist their colleagues; and English is pre-eminently a subject in which such aid can be given. The teacher in charge of such a class would suggest books, guide discussion and heighten interest and enjoyment, and, by showing that English is something more than a school subject, would help to make it a successful one. Anyone who has had experience of classes of this kind will testify to the enthusiasm shown by their members, and the mental refreshment induced by pursuing a subject as an end in itself, with no intervening purpose such as the giving of a lesson or the passing of an examination.

Every effort should be made at such classes or meetings to foster the spirit of mutual help. To select from our evidence a single instance of the effect of such help,

the Head Mistress of a large Girls' School gave us an interesting account of how she and the members of her staff formed a reading circle and read and discussed poems, especially those suitable for reading with the pupils. As a result the members of the staff asked that instead of a specialist teacher being, as previously, responsible for the English, each teacher might be allowed to take English with her own class. All of them, through the interest kindled by unaffected self-expression in fellowship with each other, had come to possess the enthusiasm, if not the knowledge, that the specialist in English requires. The same witness said that many teachers were members of the English Association whose lectures were most helpful to teachers, and were well attended by them. It was fatal for students to think that when they left the Training College their education had been completed.

When library facilities are absent it should be possible for teachers to obtain books, especially books of reference, from a Central Library provided by the Authority, of which they should all have full particulars. London and certain other Authorities, acting on this principle, have not only provideed books but have made arrangements for their circulation free of charge. Here we should like also to refer to the good work done by the National Home Reading Union. With its Magazine, its courses of reading in all subjects, and its insistence on the principle of companionship in reading with other readers, it offers great help to all who desire to read either for study or for pleasure.

CHAPTER VII.

THE UNIVERSITIES.

PRESENT POSITION OF ENGLISH IN THE UNIVERSITIES.

190. The University is the apex of the educational edifice. Hitherto this has scarcely been recognised in England. Indeed it has scarcely been the fact. For till lately our Universities were not only few and comparatively small but had little connection with the majority of the secondary schools, and none at all with the elementary. But this comparative isolation has now largely disappeared and is in a process of more and more rapid disappearance. During the last 20 years a number of new Universities have arisen, and during the last two all the Universities, old and new, have received a vast influx of additional students. If we look back over 50 years, the progress is even more striking. We have more than twice as many Universities as in 1870, and the University students have increased in much greater proportion. It seems certain that, unless the Universities entirely fail in the performance of their functions, this progress will be maintained and carried further.

Thus the situation is already wholly changed, even apart from probable future increases in both figures. The University is now an influence which makes itself felt, not only deeply as it always did, but widely. This is not merely because a much larger proportion of the secondary school boys now go to Universities; nor even because the best boys from elementary schools are beginning to go. It is also partly because the Universities no longer close their doors to women. Already there are some six thousand women students in the Universities of England and Wales. There will be many

more in a few years. So that women as well as men are now carrying the ideals of University education into schools and into homes all over the country.

There is one other reason why Universities are to-day far more important both in the life and educational system of the nation than they were a century or even half a century ago. In that period, and especially in the last 20 or 30 years, they have enormously increased their influence over the schools of the country by the system of examinations which they created and control. London University took the lead in this by the introduction of the idea of the external student as well as by school examinations. Oxford and Cambridge followed by accepting the responsibility of examining schools and granting certificates. It is obvious that this system brought University influence to bear upon scores or hundreds of schools which sent on few or no boys or girls to reside at the University. If the schools could not come to the Universities, the Universities had come to them, and recently the Universities have come not merely to the schools but to the people, and in a better way than the way of mere examination. In the last 30 years a system of University Extension Lectures and Tutorial Classes has grown up and carried University teaching, given by University teachers, all over the country. People of all kinds have increasingly availed themselves of this method of obtaining something of the advantages of University education; and its development has been so rapid that there are now over 30,000 students attending Extension Lectures and some 5,000 or 6,000 attending Tutorial Classes; that is, in each case, receiving instruction from a teacher coming from and commissioned by a University.

For all these reasons and others which could be mentioned, the University is now immensely more important in the education of the nation than it used to be. With its work as a whole we are not here concerned. The duty of this Committee is confined to considering

" the position of English " in our whole educational system, which of course includes, and is in our reference expressly stated to include, its position at the Universities.

191. Now it is not too much to say that, till quite lately, English had no position at all at the Universities. There were a few Professorships which dealt with, and a few Prizes which encouraged, the study of English Literature or Language. But that was all. And it came to very little. English was in fact not a part of the ordinary and recognised studies of a University. If any graduate or undergraduate studied Chaucer or Shakespeare or Milton, or the language in which they wrote, he did it of his own motion, and not as part of any recognised course included in the studies of a University.

It is easy to explain how this came about. The Colleges of Oxford and Cambridge were almost all founded either in the Middle Ages or at the time of the Renaissance. It took the older ones some time to shake off the idolatry of the mediæval logic and philosophy. It took those founded under the Tudors and Stuarts a long time to learn that, beside the two classical literatures and the mathematics which had fought with and in the end displaced the mediæval studies, there were other subjects proper for University study which had grown up chiefly outside the Universities and could not be denied entrance. It was quite natural that there should be some reluctance about admitting this, and even some blindness about seeing it. Men who in their school and undergraduate days had been trained entirely on Classics or Mathematics, or both, who found that the full exploration of those subjects was not only as high and serious a pursuit as the human mind can desire, but one which no human life is long enough to complete, were not likely to be quick to open their doors to other studies. And so particularly with English Literature. Habit, intellectual pride and loyalty to their schools and teachers, would alike tend to make such men look down on the books which everybody could read, and regard them as unfit to take a

place at the University side by side with the books which only scholars could read. And when the examination era began a hundred years ago, and the studies of the University began to be governed by the requirements of the "Schools," * the claims of English were still less likely to secure attention. Those who were accustomed to teach Greek and Latin as a mental discipline and a linguistic exercise, and to examine in them chiefly from the same point of view, would be certain to deny that English could be either taught, or made a subject of examination.

After all, in this matter the Universities did not lag so very far behind the nation. It is only quite lately that we in England have begun to have the definite consciousness, which the French gained in the age of Louis XIV., that we have a great and independent literature of our own, which need not lower its flag in the presence of the greatest on the earth. Was any English poet except Milton, and he partly for religious reasons, treated with the same kind of respect as Sophocles or Virgil, till within the last hundred years? We might put it more strongly. A boy or girl who spent much time reading English literature, especially poems, plays or novels, was generally thought to be following the road of the Idle Apprentice.† It was not till after Wordsworth and Shelley, and perhaps not till after Tennyson and Browning, that the reading of English poetry was generally recognised as a rational way of spending time; or, to come back to our own field, a way of educating, of drawing out, the best things in the imagination, the mind and the spirit of anyone, old or young.

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* It is unfortunate that the word "School" has to be used for two totally different things; a place of education for boys or girls, and a faculty in any particular subject at a University with the examination it prescribes; *e.g.*, the "School" of Law or History. In this Report inverted commas will indicate that it is used in the latter sense.

† Compare § 56.

That is the position which has now been reached. If it were not so, no such Committee as this, with such instructions as ours, would have been appointed. We have, as far as possible, inquired into the whole educational system of the country and examined the position occupied by English in each part of it. We find everywhere the same thing, an increasing but altogether inadequate recognition of the place of English in an Englishman's education. We have ventured to insist in our Introduction, and it is not too much to repeat it with reference to each stage of the educational ladder, that whatever the ladder is meant to climb to, the steps must be made of English. If a boy cannot read English intelligently he cannot learn, and if he cannot write it clearly he cannot use what he has learnt. We need not go into philosophical problems of the relation of language to thought: whatever may be said about them, it is roughly certain that what cannot be clearly expressed is not clearly thought.

192. This universal importance of English is not confined to the school age. In understanding and in expression, as in all else, it is the business of the University to crown and complete the effort of the school. Even if the schoolboy has learnt to read intelligently and write clearly he will seldom have travelled so far that there will be no need for the University to teach him to read deeply and wisely, to think of the reasons of things, to find language for the statement of the problems which arise in all higher studies, and for his own attempts at their solution. Whether he reads Literature or Natural Science, Theology or History or Philosophy, he will need the fullest command of the highest resources of his own language if he is to learn all that books and teachers in his subject can give him, and to make it a possession of his own.

English, then, is needed in every Faculty. It is the one subject which for an Englishman has the claim of universality. Without it he cannot attain to full powers

either of learning or of teaching in any. We should like to see this officially recognised. We should like it to be officially proclaimed by each University that in all its examinations the quality of the English written or spoken by candidates, especially its lucidity and its fitness to the subject, will carry great weight with the examiners. But this is far from all. English is not merely an indispensable handmaid without whose assistance neither philosopher, nor chemist, nor classical scholar can do his work properly. It is one of the greatest subjects to which a University can call its students. Never was that more so than at this moment when English is nearer than ever before to becoming a universally known language. The conditions created by the war have spread the knowledge of our language over the five continents of the earth. It has long been the best known European language in Asia and Africa, North America and Australia : it is likely to become so more and more : and in Europe, as we are told, it is now in the majority of countries the language most frequently learnt in addition to the mother tongue. Most of this extension of English may be due to political or commercial reasons. But there are higher reasons too. The intrinsic value of our literature is increasingly recognised. In Germany and Sweden, to mention only two countries, the study of our language has long played an important part. More indeed, much more (we are told), has been done lately in Scandinavia for English philology than has been done in England itself. In the study of our literature, it is happily true, no foreign country can rival us, but even in this field, work has been produced in France during the last 30 years which is of more importance than all that France ever produced on the subject in three hundred years before. In any case, no Englishman competent to judge doubts that our literature ranks among the two or three greatest in the world ; or that it is quite arguable that, if not perhaps the finest, it is the richest of all. Such a possession, once recognised as it now is, no University can afford to neglect.

193. Nor would it be true to say that any University is entirely neglecting it. There are important—and as a rule rapidly developing—" Schools " of English in them all. They vary greatly in plan and in the demands they make upon candidates. We regard this as a good thing. The serious study of English Language and Literature is a comparatively new one, and it is desirable that in the organisation of " Schools " of English many experiments should be made and various systems tried. Only so shall we ultimately arrive at the ideal which we desire. It would be premature, and indeed impertinent, if we were to attempt to lay down in any detail the lines of a perfect " School " of English. That is a problem for time, experience, and the experiments of many Universities to solve. But there are some things which it appears to us to be within our province and part of our duty to say. First of all, the " School " or " Schools " of English Language and Literature should rank at every English University as at least the equal of any Arts " School." By nothing less can a University recognise the fact of the importance of our language and the greatness of our literature. Of Englishmen who succeed in arriving at a humane and liberal culture at all, probably at least ninety-nine out of a hundred reach it chiefly through our own poetry and prose. Many who have given years to Greek and Latin first understand what literature is when they take to reading English. Through English, humane culture first becomes a possession and a delight to them, and it is often only after their getting hold of the English key that they can open at any rate the inner drawers of the cabinet of classical literature. Sir Walter Raleigh told us that he himself had not understood Virgil till he went back to him from Milton. And this or something like it must be a common experience. It is natural and almost inevitable that a boy should more easily get hold of what a poet is aiming at in the art of poetry, and in such forms of it as epic or ode, if he has first come in contact with this process in his own language where there are no

difficulties to surmount except those inherent in poetry itself. Unfortunately this natural order has too often been reversed in our schools so that a boy has read much Latin poetry before he has read any English, with the result that he has never begun to understand what poetry is, still less to love it, till some English poet has taught him, and he has been able, like Sir Walter Raleigh, to go back to Greek or Latin with eyes which English has opened.

This immense importance of the native language for the purposes of the humane culture, which is the highest object of a University, must henceforth be frankly recognised in English Universities, as it has been in all or almost all others. Our language and literature are as great a source of pride and may be made as great a bond of national unity to us as those of France are, and long have been, to the French; and our Universities must not lag behind the French in public and official recognition of this fact.

194. The beginnings of that recognition have made themselves increasingly apparent in our Universities of recent years. All, or nearly all, of them have established "Schools" of English, and the response of the students has shown, especially recently, the important part which English "Schools" are destined to play in the life of our Universities. Indeed some of their friends are almost alarmed at their popularity. Sir Walter Raleigh even told us that his only fear was of the Oxford "School" growing too large. He does not wish English to be taken by any except those who have a real bent for it. This points to a charge often brought against English at the Universities, though Sir Walter is himself as far as possible from bringing it. It is suggested that it is a "soft option." This is an accusation which affects the whole of our inquiry. If it were made good, it would go a long way towards providing a justification for denying English the place in our educational system which we demand for it. Above all, it would be fatal to the claims of English at the

University stage. If English is a "soft option" an English "School" is at best a dangerous experiment. It is therefore necessary to deal with this allegation before we begin the discussion of what an English "School" should be. Briefly our answer to it is that the charge is untrue and the danger imaginary. It is true that English for an Englishman cannot possess one element of hardness which all other languages, and indeed all other subjects, inevitably do. He knows it, or the beginnings of it, before he is aware of knowing anything. But it is a pure delusion to suppose that the fact that a boy or man knows enough English to talk to his brother, to take a railway ticket, or even to conduct a business, leaves him nothing hard and difficult to learn when he comes to study English Literature.* On the contrary, the very fact of that elementary difficulty being absent in this subject should enable a student of English Literature to face problems and difficulties which he often has hardly time to attempt in the literatures to get at which he must cross the barrier of a strange language. The existing English "Schools" nearly all make provision for some compulsory linguistic or philological study, a matter which we shall discuss presently. But, without discussing that, and keeping to the field of literature alone, we do not think it can be contended that it is a "soft option" to be called on to understand the art, thought, imagination of such writers as Shakespeare, Milton, Wordsworth, Shelley. Is it a soft option to make oneself master of the political philosophy of Burke? Is it a soft option to enter into the world of Chaucer, so full both of the now forgotten life of his own time and country and of the life which belongs to all countries and all times?

"Studies serve for delight." The approach to these things is delightful with an easy delight, to be perceived

* We are assured that at Oxford a "first" in English is more difficult to acquire than a "first" in any other Honours School, with the (disputable) exception of *Literæ Humaniores*.

and enjoyed by all who have the smallest turn for literature. That fact is not only one reason for the popularity of English "Schools"; it is of far wider application than the world of the "Schools" and is matter for universal congratulation and thankfulness. The literature of England belongs to all England, not to the Universities or to any *coterie* of the literary or the learned: and all may enjoy it who will. But there is another delight besides this open and universal one. In this matter, as in others, the scholar has his own task and his own reward. The man who enters an English "School" hoping for an idle or easy time should at once find that he has deceived himself. The University will ask much more of him than can as a rule be attempted by the ordinary reader. Besides the sense in which Shakespeare is open to all the world, there is another in which the full knowledge of him is the last reward of prolonged and laborious study. This is true also, in various degrees, of all great writers. An Honours "School" of English will at least start its candidates on a path which, if followed to the end, leads to such knowledge of English Literature as Bentley or Jebb possessed of Greek. No one who thinks for a moment will suppose that that is a path in which there are no hills to climb. It is clear, then, that the alarm of the "soft option" may be dismissed as a bogey.

THE STUDY OF LITERATURE IN THE UNIVERSITIES.

195. Into this scholarly study of literature other elements beside exegesis, that is the drawing out of a book all that is in it, must, of course, enter. In the first place, literature, and in particular poetry, is the finest of the fine arts, and its principles and methods need at least as much study as those of the others. Then there is the relation of literature to history. Obviously it should be read in connection with history: just as those who teach history should always use literature

for purposes of illustration. One distinguished teacher of History told us that his lectures often dealt quite as much with literature as with what would ordinarily be called History. Each of course helps the other. It is obvious that much of Dryden cannot be understood by a reader who knows nothing of the political and religious history of England in the second half of the 17th century. It is equally obvious that nowhere are certain parts of that history told with such concentrated power, with genius of that sort which refuses to be denied or forgotten, as in the poems of Dryden. There is no history in which Puritanism lives as it lives in *Paradise Lost* and *The Pilgrim's Progress*. But though they stand utterly above any history, no study of them which disdains historical assistance can be scholarly or complete.

But there is a word of warning to utter on this subject. There is a tendency in some quarters to treat Literature as a branch of History or Sociology. This is in our view a dangerous mistake. All great literature has in it two elements, the contemporary and the eternal. On the one hand, Shakespeare and Pope tell us what Englishmen were like at the beginning of the 17th and at the beginning of the 18th centuries. On the other hand they tell us what all men are like in all countries and at all times. To concentrate the study of literature mainly on the first aspect, to study it mainly as history, is to ignore its nobler, more eternal and universal element. There is a sense—the most important of all—in which Homer and Dante and Milton, Aeschylus and Shakespeare, are all of the same age or of none. Great literature is only partly the reflection of a particular year or generation: it is also a timeless thing, which can never become old-fashioned or out of date, or depend for its importance upon historical considerations. What does so depend in any of the arts, whether sculpture or painting or poetry, is in truth not great at all.

The ideal "School" of English literature will certainly have this consideration in view and not, for a moment,

allow itself to be made into a mere branch of History. It may be true that the story of the English people is best seen in English literature, but English literature contains much more than the story of the English people.

One of our witnesses suggested that this eternal element in literature has in it something of the nature of philosophy; and that consequently it should be studied in connection with philosophy. This appears very doubtful. It is true that there is an element of philosophy in nearly all great poetry. For all such poetry involves a view of the world and of the essence and meaning of life. And some might go so far as to claim that, just as Aristotle considered poetry a more philosophical and higher thing than history, so there is a sense in which the truth of poetry is higher as well as far more permanent than that of philosophy itself. But that of course does not prove that they are the same thing, or that the study of poetry and philosophy suit the same persons, or that the two easily form a unit for educational purposes. The method, the temper, it may almost be said the truth of literature are different from those of the philosophy of the Schools. Few of the greatest men of letters have been philosophers, in the technical sense of that word, and few great philosophers have been great men of letters. Literature is an art; and art is a different thing from either science or speculation, the mainsprings of philosophy. Works of science or speculation, as of history, are often superseded and cease to have more than a historical interest. A great work of art, whether it be the Parthenon or *Paradise Lost*, can never be superseded.

196. But the remark of the witness whom we quoted just now suggests a further question. Would it not be possible for a University into whose scheme it could be fitted, to establish two successive "Schools" of English intended to follow one upon the other as those of Classical Moderations and Literæ Humaniores at Oxford have always done? We understand that, although it is

possible to take the two sections of the Cambridge "School" one after the other, this is neither the intention of the authorities nor the practice which prevails. Nor, if it were, would it be the same thing as the proposal we are discussing. The suggestion is that there might be established an English Moderations in which the main element was pure literature and the study of the language necessary for its complete understanding; and an English Literæ Humaniores in which the history and philosophy of our country were the principal elements, as the Greek and Roman philosophers and historians are the principal elements of its prototype.

There can be no doubt that our literature is rich enough to furnish material for such a scheme. The poets and the prose writers who are neither philosophers nor historians would fully occupy the first "School": and as for the second, no country has a greater succession of philosophers and historians. We have no Plato and no Thucydides: but at least for the purpose of such a school Burke is more than the equal of Demosthenes, and the number of English historians and philosophers who are permanent possessions may be held to make up for the absence of any single stars so bright and so particular as the greatest of the Greeks. As it is, the English philosophers are seldom studied at Oxford except as a part of Literæ Humaniores in which there is not time for reading them seriously. On the whole, while regarding such a "School" as only an experiment, we should be glad to see it tried. But it is obviously open to the great objection that its adoption might possibly enable a man who knew no language but his own to obtain a University degree in Honours. We should regret such a result: for an Honours degree in any Arts "School" ought certainly to imply something wider than a merely national culture. The objection is, however, probably rather theoretical than practical. Few candidates who knew no other language would in practice attain to such a standard in English as would be necessary for Honours.

But only experience could decide whether a "School" of the kind suggested could justify itself, and in particular whether it would provide as satisfactory a complete University course as the present ordinary practice at Cambridge which is to take a Classical or Modern Languages Tripos before going on to English.

197. This mention of the frequent practice of taking a Classical or Modern Language "School" before the English, leads us naturally to the discussion of an important question, that of the relation of the study of English Literature to that of other Literatures and, first, to that of the Greek and Latin Classics. Hitherto, or till comparatively lately, these last have occupied the whole field of humane studies at our Universities. Till within the last 30 years or so there has been only one great "School" of Literature, at any rate at Oxford or Cambridge, that of the ancient Classics. In this "School" the large majority of the best teachers of English Literature to-day received their University training. We have nothing to do with that "School" in itself, or with the question of the maintenance of Classical studies for their own sake in the educational system of the country. That has been under the consideration of another Committee. But we have to do with Classical "Schools" and studies if and so far as they affect English, or English them. And we think that we are not overstepping our reference if we urge that the Classical "Schools" would themselves be gainers if more stress were laid in their regulations and practice on the knowledge of English Literature which has caught so much light from the Greek and Latin and reflects so much back upon them. We should like to see it expressly laid down that a candidate for Honours in a Classical "School" should have opportunities of illustrating his studies of the poetry or prose, the history or law or philosophy, of Greece and Rome, by their English parallels or derivatives, and that such illustration should have weight with the examiners in deciding his class. We believe that such a regulation would not only be a just

recognition of the importance of English and of the fact that all foreign literatures are best approached by an Englishman through English, but would bring added life and new interest to the Classical "Schools" and classical studies. Professor Grierson remarked to us, and we agree with him, that classical studies would be in a securer position to-day if their teachers had always recognised that the study of English literature was an essential supplement to them.

198. But there is the other side to this question. There is not only the help which English can give to Classics, but the help which Classics can give to English. It is obvious that the influence of the Greek and Latin writers is written large over much or most of English literature. Professor Saintsbury told us that "almost every piece of English literature worth anything, till within the last 50 years, had been written by a man who had had a classical education." This is an exaggeration, no doubt: for it seems to forget Bunyan and perhaps even Shakespeare. But there is a good deal of truth in it. It has been argued that even Bunyan, who owes everything to the translators of the Bible, is through them the pupil and the debtor of the classical writers who were the masters of his masters. But however that may be, no one who has had a classical education, and made a possession of it, reads our own poetry or prose without frequent enjoyment of its references to old classical friends. No one who has not had such an education, reads them without irritation at his author's classicising or regret at his own ignorance. The effects of this can be exaggerated, and often are. Critics have asserted that no one can understand Shelley who has not read Plato. This appears to be only true in something of the same sense in which it has been said that nobody can completely understand the smallest fact in his own life until he has grasped the whole previous history of the universe, all of which is, after a fashion, its cause. It is certain that many of Shelley's happiest

and most understanding readers have been among those who knew nothing of Plato. Keats knew by instinct far more of the Greeks than all but a very few Greek scholars. English literature does not present a closed door to those who do not bring the classical key.

Yet there can be no doubt that those who have some knowledge of the Classics find their way more easily in English. Mark Pattison said that "an appreciation of Milton is the last reward of consummated scholarship." That is to say, only a good classical scholar understands and enjoys all that there is to understand and enjoy in Milton. And this is true of other authors also, though not to the same extent. But it is not the whole point. The value of the Classics for English is felt long before a man reaches those heights. The University teachers of English who have given evidence before us are very nearly unanimous in desiring that a candidate for English Honours should have some acquaintance with Greek or Latin literature, and if possible with both. It has indeed been contended by a distinguished authority that English literature without such an acquaintance is "not very profitable." With this view we entirely disagree for reasons already given. But the large majority of Professors of English in the Universities express their desire that students of English Literature should, if possible, know some Greek and Latin. With that desire we strongly sympathise. We recognise the strong consensus of authoritative opinion in agreement with it; and we share it ourselves, not in the interest of the maintenance of classical studies for their own sake, with which we have nothing to do, but in the interest of the ideally complete study of English. We have already suggested that in Classical "Schools" at Universities opportunity should be given to candidates to illustrate their classical studies from English literature, and that the presence or absence of such illustration should weigh with the examiners in deciding the candidate's class. We now recommend that similar weight should be given in an English Honour "School" to

such knowledge of the Greek and Latin classics as enables a candidate to illustrate and complete his English studies, and to understand the relation between the ancient writers and their English successors who have often owed so much to them.

199. But the ideally complete in human knowledge is seldom attainable, even in Universities. It is certain that though nearly all candidates for Honours in English will know some other language than their own, the majority will know very little Greek or Latin and that, as things are at present, a great many will know none at all. So far, the ideal will not be attained. Indeed, the ideal includes a great deal else beside Greek and Latin. We spoke just now of the frequent Cambridge practice of taking a Classical or Modern Language Tripos before going on to English. This led us to discuss the relation of English to the Classics. But there are also, of course, important relations between English and the Modern Languages. The ideal study of English Literature would include them also. It would include French, Italian, Spanish, German, all of which as well as in very recent days Russian, have greatly influenced English Literature; and this is taking no account of non-European literatures, one of which, that of the Hebrews, has been second only in influence, if second at all, to the classical languages themselves. It is obvious that a young man or woman who goes in for a degree at the age of 21 or 22 cannot possibly have mastered all these. English literature alone is a very large field and it could not even be hastily run over if the student had to traverse these others also in the short time at his disposal. The accomplishment of the completed whole must be left over for the M.A. stage, if not for that of the Doctorate. For the "School" of English Honours, then, to be taken by undergraduate students, we can only recommend that, whether in addition to Classics or in substitution for them, weight should be given in the examination to a knowledge of one or more foreign literatures, so far as

they are related to our own. The relation will in this case be a double one. There is English influence on France, Italy, and Germany, for instance, as well as French, Italian, and German on England. The more of this that can be known the better: provided always—and this is of the first importance—that it is known from the writers themselves and not from text-books read solely for examination purposes. Where foreign writers cannot be studied in their works as they wrote them, the motto of the student should be "not text-books but translations": or "not text-books till after translations have been read." Especially, the greatest translation in English, perhaps in any language, should be universally read, far more read than it is at present both in Universities and schools. We refer, of course, to the Authorised Version of the Bible which is among the greatest of English classics and has been the most influential of them all as well on English literature as on English life.*

200. We now come to a more difficult question. So far we have been dealing with what may be called contemporary influences. The various national literatures of Europe as they matured at and since the Renaissance are all alive to-day. The writers of each generation have, to a greater or less degree, influenced, or been influenced by the English literature contemporary with them, and the process of influence and counter-influence has never altogether ceased. So with the Classics. They may, in a real sense, be said to be born anew with each generation and in some respects their writers are the most contemporary of all. But this is scarcely true of the origins out of which the modern literatures grew. It is safe to say that if English had stopped before Chaucer it would in fact have ceased to be read to-day. From the point of view of literature (we postpone that of language for a moment) the large majority of our witnesses agree that the sources of Chaucer and of his successors are in the main

* *See* §§ 310–314.

not English at all, still less Anglo-Saxon, but Italian, French and Græco-Latin as seen through mediæval glasses. And this is true, as some of our witnesses pointed out, of form as well as of substance or matter. It is not merely story or thought that the whole course of English literature since Chaucer has borrowed and developed from "Mediterranean" sources: it is also all or nearly all the forms in which the stories have been told and the thoughts expressed. If then we go behind Chaucer, as it is generally agreed to be part of the ideal that we should, where are we to go? To the languages or influences which are sometimes described in one word as "Mediterranean," that is to old French and Italian or mediæval Latin, or on the other hand to old English and Anglo-Saxon?

The answer is again, we think, "to both in the rare cases in which that will be possible; to either when both are unattainable" For if the sources of Chaucer's matter are mainly Mediterranean, he is himself English of the English; and if we look for earlier appearances of the most permanent, at least of the deepest and most serious characteristics of our race, it is not in any Mediterranean books that we shall find them but in things written in this island, connected though they be with Chaucer by the slenderest of links, in *Beowulf* and Alfred and Bede. Anglo-Saxon, then, and Early English, even if not the sources of the writings of Chaucer, are at least in a true sense, sources of Chaucer himself. And of course they are still more sources of the contemporary school of alliterative poetry of which *Piers Plowman* is the most famous example. We recommend, then, that in a "School" of Honours in English Literature weight should be given to knowledge both of Anglo-Saxon and pre-Chaucerian English Literature, and of the "Mediterranean" literatures to which Chaucer's debt is so much more immediately obvious: to knowledge of both if possible, or, as that will rarely be attainable at the undergraduate stage, to knowledge of either. All candidates for Honours should

be expected to show at least some knowledge of one or the other. We have already recommended that weight should be given to knowledge of the Greek and Latin classics, and of the relation between them and the great English writers.

THE STUDY OF LANGUAGE IN THE UNIVERSITIES

201. We come now to the question of language. What part should the study of language, what part should philology, play in a "School" of English?

The older forms of the English language received some recognition in the studies of our Universities long before anything that could be called English literature in the modern sense was recognised. The very notion of such a thing as a national literature of our own scarcely existed when, even in the heyday of the Renaissance with the enthusiasm for classical literature at its height, Cambridge began to give evidence of interest in the origins of our Language. It was at the instigation of Archbishop Parker, who had been Master of Benet College (Corpus Christi College), that in 1567 the first Anglo-Saxon book was published in England. Parker was a collector of Anglo-Saxon MSS, which after his death came to the libraries of Corpus and Trinity and of the University.

A project of Sir Henry Spelman of Trinity College to found lectureships in Anglo-Saxon at Cambridge was unfulfilled through his death in 1641 or the troubles of the Civil War, but he had given the impulse to the publication of Alfred's translation of Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* (1643) and other Anglo-Saxon works.

At Oxford, Archbishop Laud, when Master of St. John's College, and afterwards Chancellor, encouraged Anglo-Saxon studies, and gave to the Bodleian the Peterborough version of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. In 1659 the University Press printed William Somner's *Dictionarium Anglo-Saxonico Latino Anglicum*, its first publication in Anglo-Saxon.

During the Commonwealth Thomas Marshall of Lincoln College became associated in Holland with Francis Junius, editor of the poems of Cædmon (1655) and of the Gothic and Anglo-Saxon Gospels. Marshall became Rector of Lincoln College in 1672, and Junius followed him there in 1676. On his death in 1677 he left his MSS. and his Anglo-Saxon type to the University. From this type were printed the first grammar of Anglo-Saxon, by George Hickes, another Fellow of Lincoln, in 1689, and his *Linguarum veterum septentrionalium Thesaurus* in 1703–5. Meanwhile a "Saxon lecture" had been founded by Sir Joseph Williamson at Queen's College where one of the Fellows, William Nicholson, gave a weekly lecture on the subject. The most eminent of the Queen's College group of Anglo-Saxon students was Edward Thwaites, afterwards Regius Professor of Greek, who helped Hickes in the *Thesaurus*, and published in 1698 an edition of the Anglo-Saxon Heptateuch printed "ex typis Junianis."

The interest of these 16th and 17th century students of Anglo-Saxon was mainly antiquarian and controversial. They wished to "justify by historical documents their attitude towards the sacrament, the secular privileges of the Clergy, and the use of the scriptures in the vernacular." The linguistic aspect of the study was subordinate, and chiefly a means to an end.

During the latter part of the 18th century the interest in Anglo-Saxon at the Universities declined. But at the close of the century it received a stimulus by the foundation of the Rawlinson Chair of Anglo-Saxon at Oxford, and, though vexatious restrictions impaired its usefulness, two of the early Professors, James Ingram in his edition of *The Saxon Chronicle*, and J. J. Conybeare in his writings on Anglo-Saxon poetry helped to advance the study of the subject. The impulse given to the investigation of the early history of this Island by Sharon Turner's *History of the Anglo-Saxons* (1799–1805) led to enthusiastic work in many fields of Anglo-Saxon study in the first half of the 19th

century by Lingard, Palgrave, Thorpe, J. M. Kemble of Trinity College, Cambridge, and others. But the literary and historical aspects were still predominant. After the middle of the century linguistic scholarship turned more to Middle English, and the Early English Text Society was founded by F. J. Furnivall in 1864.

In 1858 the restrictions attached to the Rawlinson Professorship were removed, and it was made tenable for life instead of for five years. At the same time the scope of the Chair was extended to include "the low German dialects and the antiquities of Northern Europe." A bias was thus given in the direction of comparative philology, and Joseph Bosworth, the first holder of the Chair under the new conditions, from 1858 to 1876, was primarily a grammarian and philologist. He founded the first Chair of Anglo-Saxon at Cambridge, the Elrington and Bosworth Professorship, established in 1878. W. W. Skeat, who held this Chair till 1912, was also predominantly interested in philology, though his work lay more in the Middle-English than the Anglo-Saxon period.

202. From the above retrospect it will be seen that the study of English language, in its earliest form of Anglo-Saxon, considerably preceded that of English literature in Oxford and Cambridge, and that from the Elizabethan period onwards there were intermittent endeavours to promote it. Those who were attracted to it were influenced by religious, literary or historical interests, and they did not pursue the subject on narrow and rigidly philological lines.

But about the middle of the 19th century there was a new orientation of the study and it was diverted into fresh channels. The scholars who chiefly influenced the examinations in English of the University of London and the Cambridge Modern and Mediæval Tripos, and somewhat later the Oxford Final Honour School of English Language and Literature, had either been trained in Germany or were under the influence of German educational ideals and methods. In their study of Anglo-

Saxon they divorced language from literature and history and devoted their attention almost exclusively to philology and phonetics. Hence they tended to alienate from the study of English all but the small body whose interests and outlook were scientific rather than literary, and who handled linguistic problems in the spirit of the chemist or the physicist.

203. This was stated with great force in the evidence of Professor Chadwick:

"At the time when the first Honours Schools in English were established philology was regarded as their main object. This was due to the fact that German influence was then paramount. In our Tripos English and German were run on parallel lines, and the course was based on the courses pursued in German Universities.

"It was certainly possible for this country to learn from Germany some very useful lessons—the devotion of both teachers and students to the pursuit of learning, and the readiness of those in authority to recognise its value by financial support. But the course actually taken by our Universities was to try to copy the German curriculum. Now German education differed from ours in some important respects. It was at its best in those forms of study which may most readily be systematised; consequently philology was a more popular subject than literature. The system of Indo-European philology which German learning had built up was a great achievement, whatever faults may be found with it in detail. . . .

"Owing to the large number of foreign teachers here and the fact that our own students were advised to take courses abroad, English studies came to be regarded largely through German glasses, and the chief weight was —not unnaturally—laid on that element which English had in common with German, viz., the groundwork of the language.

"What was overlooked by our authorities was the fact that they were modelling an examination course on a course intended for research students. The German

student was not bound to confine his reading within the limits fixed for an examination; he could extend his studies into any related subject in which he was interested. His knowledge of languages too was much wider than is usual among our students. A man who knew Greek fairly well, and probably a certain amount of Sanskrit, had the means of grasping, and of using his critical faculties upon, the phonetic laws set before him. But our unfortunate students were utterly at sea when confronted with the laws of Teutonic philology. The only faculties they appealed to in them were those of memory and faith."

Similarly Sir Walter Raleigh stated that English literature could be the basis of a liberal education, but needed to be freed from slavery to philology and phonology, except so far as these bear on literature. A partial bias had been given to philology by the achievements of German philologists, but there was such a thing as literary philology, a genuine artistic and antiquarian interest in words. He deprecated the form of philology concerned with "hypothetical sound-shiftings in the primeval German forests."

Mr. Nichol Smith expressed the view that the trouble was not with Anglo-Saxon itself, but with the way it had been taught in the past 30 or 40 years. In all the English "Schools" of which he had knowledge the teaching of language seemed to be confined to phonology and morphology. This he thought was due to the teachers having taken their methods over from German teachers, which he regretted as a very great misfortune for the study of the English language.

Professor Ker was inclined to think that "the division between philology and literature had been made too absolute; that in English philology too little attention had been paid to syntax and too much to separate words. Historical grammar and the history of the language ought not to be regarded as a philological side of the study distinct from the history of literature."

Other witnesses spoke to the same effect, and we are unanimously convinced that in University work, before the post-graduate period, in the teaching of the English language in the pre-Chaucerian stages, philology and phonetics should be given a subordinate place, and that the chief aims should be to enable students to read our earlier literature with understanding and enjoyment, and at the same time (to use the words of one witness) appreciate "the humane and æsthetic significance of language as the expression of thought." There has already been a considerable movement in this direction and in our opinion it should be encouraged and quickened. Some of the papers on the history of language recently set in the Oxford and Cambridge Higher Certificate Examination seem to us to be on very suitable lines, though for candidates in a Final Honour "School" they would have to be of a more advanced type.

204. The fact that the teachers of English language in the Universities during the latter half of the 19th century had been chiefly trained abroad, or were dominated by German influences, had another unfortunate consequence. They approached their subject from the angle of Comparative Philology. Their main concern was not with English for itself, but in its relation to more or less allied groups of languages, and their interest in it usually stopped short abruptly after the Chaucerian period.

We are glad to note increasing signs of a reaction against this limited view, and a growing realisation that Elizabethan and 18th-century English are as well worthy of study by the linguist as the earlier phases of the mother-tongue. This view of the organic unity of English in all its periods was emphasised in his evidence by Professor Wyld. He stated that it was "often supposed that the subject ended with Chaucer, but the problems of Old English were comparatively simple compared with some recent problems from the fifteenth century. The problems were more interesting, more vital, more living, more

literary, more human and really more difficult after Chaucer than before."

Professor Atkins in his evidence took a similar line :— "There is a romance of words which is largely neglected in our linguistic studies, and to utilise this element would be to render them of yet greater educational value. Thus the study of Old English and Middle English forms might be made both profitable and attractive by consistently linking up the earlier forms with those in modern use. Or, again, the study of modern dialects, place names, and family names should form part of a living linguistic course." Other witnesses spoke to the same effect. The interest and value of the study of English on these lines have been illustrated by Professor Wyld in his own writings, by Dr. Henry Bradley in his *Making of English*, by Professor Ernest Weekley, in his *Romance of Words*, and by others. The monumental record of such investigation is the Oxford *New English Dictionary*, which traces the life-history of every English word from its infancy to the present day. If English is thus treated as a living whole, if the study of the forms of words is subordinated to that of their meanings—to which the technical term "semantics" is now frequently applied—and if it is realised that Shakespeare and Dryden, Burke and Jane Austen offer problems and materials to the inquirer as well as Cynewulf or Chaucer, an illimitable field is opened. Here language becomes in the best sense a handmaid not only of literature but of truth. How many misinterpretations of the Bible and of Shakespeare are due to the change of meaning in words since the Elizabethan period! This subtle process is always going on, sapping and undermining the bases of our full comprehension of the utterances of the past. The expert in language can perform a real service not only to students but to the community at large by keeping it continually alive to this transvaluation in the meaning of words, and thus helping to free it from the dominion of the idols of the market-place.

205. While thus indicating the lines on which we think that the English language will be most fruitfully studied, in the pre-graduate stage, we do not undervalue the importance or the interest of purely philological study. Its claims have been powerfully advocated by Professor Wyld who told us that " philology was not a dull subject unless taught in a dull way by dull people," and stated that " research in language had been scandalously neglected in this country." He pointed out that " what we had not done for ourselves was done by a Swede writing a History of English sounds, accidence and idiom for Swedish students in Training Colleges."

We recognise that the science of language can inspire as much ardour in its pursuit as any other science, that Browning's ideal " Grammarian " is no figment of the imagination. But just because philology—investigating sound-shiftings, changes in the form of words, variations of dialect, and the inter-relation of languages—*is* a science, we are of opinion that in this abstract and rigorous form it should be a separate study, which should be predominantly post-graduate. It should form a recognised avenue to the Doctorate, and full provision should be made for it at this stage. Its importance when viewed as a science should not be judged by the comparatively small number of its students or by its lack of popular appeal. As with other sciences it has had unforeseen practical reactions. The discovery during the last century of the relationship, however remote, between English and Sanskrit is a fact not without significance in our social and political relations with our Indian fellow-subjects.

206. On these points we are agreed, and there is substantial unanimity among our witnesses. But on coming to the question whether Anglo-Saxon, on lines such as those suggested above, should be *compulsory* for University students of English Language and Literature we found much greater divergence of opinion among our witnesses, and it was evident that this question raised another which requires a previous answer. Should

English be one "School," embracing both language and literature, as in most Universities, or should it be divided into two separate "Schools," one of language and one of literature, as at Liverpool? The latter plan has in its support the high authority of Professors Wyld and Elton, who have been at the head of the two "Schools" at Liverpool, and we are glad that such an experiment should be made. Nevertheless we have no hesitation in saying that a single "School" meets a far more general need. It must have been very difficult even for Professor Wyld to make a "School" of English Language, which included no literature, really humane, or fit to be regarded as an "Arts" "School" at all. Professor Elton's task is less difficult, no doubt. But we notice that his "School" has to go outside English: the students who do no Old English are obliged to attend classes in Latin and Modern Languages. In any case it seems to us certain that for all, except a very small minority—and Universities cannot provide "Schools" to suit every student who enters their walls—a joint "School" making provision both for Literature and for Language is a much better arrangement than one which provides only for Language. This joint "School" should probably be the normal type of English "School"; though experiments such as the two Liverpool "Schools" or the two which exist at Newcastle, one combining English Literature from Chaucer onwards with Latin Literature and the other combining it with Philosophy, or the combination of English and Greek desired by the Professor of English at Newcastle, may all play a useful part by its side. Indeed as all of these include more or less of language they are all instances of the variety possible within the limits of the joint "School" of Language and Literature. Another instance is provided by Cambridge, where both the History of the English Language and Anglo-Saxon can be taken as alternatives to purely literary subjects;* but they can also be taken in another Tripos in conjunction with other philological

* English Tripos, Section A.

studies.* And Anglo-Saxon forms an important part of a third Cambridge examination, in Early Literature and History.†

207. Assuming, then, that the normal English "School" should be one comprising both literature and language, what part should language play in it? This question, for us, means what part should be played in it by the language or languages which influenced the full-grown developments of English literature and the English language. With the question of a comparative "School" of Philology we have nothing to do. That would of course include English, but it would not be an English "School" and English would presumably play no greater part in it than Greek or Spanish. For the purpose of an English "School," the language problem is of course much narrower than this. But it is large enough to raise difficult questions. The first of these is that already mentioned, whether Anglo-Saxon should be compulsory for students who seek Honours in the English "School." There was general agreement among our witnesses, and we ourselves agree, that it should not be an obligatory subject in Pass examinations. But so far as Honours students are concerned the opinions of our witnesses were sharply divided.

Those who looked upon some knowledge of Anglo-Saxon as essential to the study of English by Honours students put forward the following arguments :—

(1) The continuity of spirit in English literature from the earliest times to the present day.

Thus Professor de Sélincourt said : "We were Anglo-Saxon at basis, and he would take as the basis the literature of the country from its earliest time with a study of the culture and civilisation of the Anglo-Saxon people, to see what was grafted on it. He would admit that from a purely literary point of view a knowledge of Latin or French or Italian was more important than

* Modern and Mediæval Languages Tripos, Part II.

† English Tripos, Section B.

a knowledge of Old English, but Anglo-Saxon was not a difficult subject from the literary point of view, and he saw no reason why it should be excluded from work in which it was an important integral part, if not overlaid with Phonology." To the question "Why go further back than Chaucer and Langland?" he replied that "the *Battle of Maldon* and *Beowulf* were wanted and not they alone. There was really no break in English prose from the earliest Chronicle to the present time." Similarly it was said that "Old English should be read not as a dead thing but as a living part of English literature. Nothing was more striking than the way the English people did not alter" (Sir W. Raleigh). "Bede illustrated the growth of the English mind; there was an element that had persisted right through" (Dr. R. W. Chambers). "English Literature was visibly based upon Old English though enormously modified by the influences that had come in since. Anglo-Saxon literature gave the English outlook on life, and this had at all times been the same" (Miss Wardale).

(2) The direct linguistic descent of modern English from Anglo-Saxon.

Thus Mr. Nichol Smith stated:—"The Oxford School of English Language and Literature . . . were unanimous that in the interests of a "School" which claimed to turn out people competent to teach English at all stages it was essential that all students, even those whose main interest was in literature, should be able to read Anglo-Saxon and Middle English. . . . He thought that for the study of Middle English and Chaucer, Old French was extremely important, and that as far as subject matter and form were concerned it was more important than Anglo-Saxon. But for the study of the history of the language as language, or of the historical development of English prose, Anglo-Saxon was necessary. English was a Teutonic language, and it was in connection with the study of language that the Oxford School insisted on the inclusion of Anglo-Saxon." Similarly it was said

"A good deal of what King Alfred wrote was not of much value as literature, but as language it was vital" (Dr. R. W. Chambers). "As a student of the language in a very minute way, 50 years by 50 years, he felt more and more a great sense of the continuity of the English language, and of the development of English prose from the very earliest stage to the present day" (Professor Wyld).

208. The witnesses who were opposed to the compulsory study of Anglo-Saxon maintained (1) that the time occupied in learning it would be more fruitfully employed in studying works of higher literary value than are found in Anglo-Saxon, (2) that English literature owed more to "Mediterranean" and French sources and influence than to Teutonic. This view was put strongly by Professor Chadwick, who declared that "it cannot be too clearly recognised that compulsory philology is the natural and mortal enemy of humanistic studies." Another witness stated that "the men would not stand philology and the women avoided it." Professor Chadwick further expressed the opinion that it was "a mistake to compel students of modern literature to read anything earlier than Chaucer." The compulsory study of Anglo-Saxon literature at the pre-graduate stage is in his view open to two serious objections:—"(1) The links which connect it with later literature are very slight. Practically they disappear in the 12th and 13th centuries. (2) the amount of Anglo-Saxon literature which will attract students purely from the literary point of view is not great—not so great as to repay them for the time they will have to spend in acquiring a sufficient mastery of the language to appreciate it. . . . The poetry is too remote from that of modern times both in form and spirit, while the prose is of little interest except to the student of history." The evidence of Mr. F. L. Attenborough was on similar lines.

A memorandum sent to us by Professor Elton contains the following:—"The students usually arrive ill seen in Latin and modern languages. But these

must be known if English literature is to be made intelligible. If they have not been learned before, they must be learned during University life. Accordingly the honours men, though not examined in them for their degree, attend classes in these subjects. They are, I am convinced 'better value' than Old English, and there would be no time for both without cutting down the literary programme unduly." Sir Sidney Lee "had great doubts as to whether the study of Old English was always an advantage. There were some students who found it very difficult to interest themselves in it intelligently and were prone to resort to cram. There should be sufficient elasticity in the curriculum to permit such students to develop more on the literary side."

209. We have given very careful consideration to this question which, as has been seen, has so vitally affected the development of the "Schools" of English in the Universities.

We feel that under the influence of theories which assigned an almost exclusively Teutonic descent to English culture and institutions there has been an excessive concentration by students of the origins of our language and literature on the Anglo-Saxon elements. In particular the study of language has been far too often taken to mean only Anglo-Saxon and Middle English. This is a mistake. We have already quoted Professor Wyld, one of the greatest authorities on philology, as telling us that the problems of language after Chaucer and indeed after the Renaissance are quite as interesting as those of the earlier period. A living language is always changing both in form and in meaning, and the English language should be studied quite as much from the point of view of semantics, or the study of meanings, as from that of origins, structure or grammar. There is another point of view from which Anglo-Saxon and Middle English have been allowed to occupy the field too exclusively. The important con-

tributions from Mediæval Latin and Middle French (in its Anglo-Norman form) have not been given sufficient weight. Gower wrote in the three languages, and Chaucer's verse-forms have in them as much of French as of English. A study of their Romance antecedents is essential to a full understanding of their writings and of their place in literary history.

It may be said that in the use of such an argument as this, and in some of the evidence just quoted, we have gone back to the literary point of view and deserted that of language. But in truth, for the purposes of an English "School" they are inseparable. For those purposes language which has never issued in literature is at best of subordinate interest. We have therefore come to the conclusion that from the point of view of language as well as from that of literature it is desirable to give the Honours student an alternative to Anglo-Saxon and, while requiring him to show knowledge of one of the two main streams which united to make our modern English Language and Literature, to allow him, if he so desires, to take Middle French and Mediæval Latin, including such ancient classics as directly influenced the writers of the Middle Ages, in preference to Anglo-Saxon or what may be called the Northern or Baltic as opposed to the Mediterranean group of origins. That is to say, we reject the demand put forward in some quarters that no candidate should be allowed to obtain Honours in English without offering Anglo-Saxon. We think that that demand fails to take account of the equal claims of other sources. It has never been held necessary even for a First Class in the Classical "Schools" that a candidate should know the Aeolic dialect, in which incomparably greater things were written than were ever written in Anglo-Saxon: and there seems to be no good ground for giving the language of *Beowulf* a place of privilege and compulsion not accorded to the language of Sappho.

210. In saying this we must not be understood to undervalue Anglo-Saxon or in any way to discourage

its study. On the contrary we believe that if the study of Anglo-Saxon and Middle English is in future pursued on the broad and humane lines which we have suggested above, it will, whether compulsory or not, attract an increasing number of students by its intrinsic interest and importance. Anglo-Saxon is the chief key to our knowledge of English life and ideas for a period of some five hundred years. No other modern European nation has a literature of its own of so early a date and containing elements that have remained constant throughout its development. Even those who do not make a study of *Beowulf*, of the poetry of Cynewulf or the prose of Alfred, should have sufficient knowledge of the earlier stages of the language to understand the vocabulary and grammar of Chaucer and the prosody of *Piers Plowman*. In the words of a 17th-century "Saxonist," William L'Isle, "to neglect the beginnings of such an excellent tongue will bring upon us the foul disgrace not only of ignorance, but of extreme ingratitude towards our famous ancestors, who left us so many, so goodly monuments in their own Dialect recorded."

Yet perhaps, even so, our last word on this subject should be one of warning. The primary object of an English "School" should be to become a true School of the Humanities. If it is to be that to the fullest extent we must not neglect our fathers and grandfathers for the sake of our more remote ancestors. There has been, as we have seen, in the past, and there may still be in the future, a danger of so overloading the English School with what may be called primitive literature as to leave little time for the later and modern literature which is sure to be the beginning of the humane and inspiring influence to be hoped for from the School. This would, in our view, be a great misfortune. If the later literature, so much easier of approach, be crowded out, the humane influence which English should exercise is only too likely never to come into play at all. It would be a mistake to sacrifice Burke and Johnson, Wordsworth and

Shelley, for the sake of things of an appeal so much more remote as early language and early literature must inevitably be. We have agreed that candidates for Honours should be expected to show some knowledge either of the English and other Northern or of the Mediterranean origins of the language and literature whose destiny was fixed by the genius of Chaucer. But in neither case should the standard of knowledge required be so high as to occupy the bulk of the students' time. Let those who choose be "Anglo-Saxons" and those who choose be "Mediterraneans," and let those who have special tastes or gifts in either direction or in that of the ancient classics, carry their studies as far as they like. The "School" must have room for the enthusiasm of specialists. But its ordinary students will not be specialists. And its ordinary rule and aim should be the production, neither of "Anglo-Saxons" nor of "Mediterraneans" but of Englishmen. It should not continue the old mistake of supposing that only early or obsolete languages provide material for scholarly study. On the contrary, there is ample room, as we have seen, for such study both of language and literature in the English which lies between the earliest work of Chaucer and the English of to-day.

VALUE OF A PASS SCHOOL IN ENGLISH.

211. Our attention has been drawn to the fact that some Universities have no Pass "School" in English. We regret this and advise that such "Schools" should be established. For Passmen, as for men who take Honours, English is the most natural and obvious road to humane culture. In all "Schools," Pass and Honour, the universal claim of English on Englishmen should be recognised; it should play some part in them all. Indeed, as we have already argued, a man who has not the command of his own language, which is his necessary instrument of thought, cannot really do justice to any subject. We therefore think that English should be a qualifying subject

in the matriculation examinations of all Universities, and that it should be recognised that no one is fit to pursue University studies who has not a fair knowledge of English.

Nor does there seem any reason for denying English a "School" of its own, a recognition accorded to so many subjects which, to put it at the lowest, have no higher claims. A Pass "School" indeed has an important function of its own which an Honours school cannot perform. It exists for a different class of man, a very valuable class, men of abilities not necessarily inferior to those of the men who seek Honours, but different in kind. This class—as we have been told by many witnesses—at present suffers from being forced to enter an Honours School, either because there is no other or because its members seek to enter professions at present closed or virtually closed to Passmen. Such restrictions are in our opinion unfortunate and mistaken. Over and over again we have been told by witnesses who speak with experience and authority that the man who takes a Fourth class in English or even a Third, is very often a very inferior man to the man who has taken a Pass. The one has been trying to do what he had not the natural ability to do: has been taught what he could not learn: and in the end has often been accorded a more or less compassionate Class. The other has been learning what he was fit for and has learnt it. There is no doubt which process has the more satisfactory result, and we hope that all such restrictions requiring Honours degrees for public posts will be reconsidered and ultimately abolished.

SCHOLARSHIPS AND STUDENTSHIPS.

212. We look forward to a large increase in the students of English at the Universities owing to the importance and attraction of the subject itself. And, as appears from what we have already said, we hope that Honours degree courses in English will often be taken by those who have previously specialised in Classics, modern foreign languages, or even in Science. We are

far from looking upon entrance Scholarships in English as the only, or always the most desirable, avenue to the Final School, Tripos, or other degree course in the subject. Moreover, even when the scholarship is awarded for English, we are of opinion that the candidate's knowledge of other languages, classical or modern, and of their corresponding cultures should be tested at the same time. The wider the undergraduate's basis of general knowledge, the more fruitful is his study of the mother tongue and its literature likely to be. But it is obvious that so long as English has to compete with subjects which are subsidised by numerous and valuable entrance and other scholarships, it will be at a disadvantage. Able students with a natural bent towards the subject will be driven by economic pressure, or by the desire for the status of a scholarship-holder, to devote themselves to other less congenial studies.

213. At Oxford, so we understand, approximately 100 Scholarships and Exhibitions are awarded annually for Classics, and about the same number at Cambridge. There are also numerous Scholarships for Mathematics, History and Natural Science. One or two Scholarships in English have recently been awarded by Oxford Colleges. But according to the information with which we have been supplied, the entrance or pre-graduate scholarships in English at either the old or the new Universities are few in number and are generally due to some special benefaction, *e.g.*, the Douglas Jerrold Scholarship, awarded every four years at Christ Church, Oxford; the Owen's Studentship and the Campbell Clarke, Rosa Morison and John Oliver Hobbes Memorial Scholarships at University College, London; and the Inglis Scholarship (biennial) at King's College, London. Of the 19 Scholarships annually awarded by the University of London to students who have passed the Intermediate or the first Examination for medical degrees six are allocated to languages. Two of these are assigned to Classics, and the other four may be obtained in French, German, Italian or English.

The Women's Colleges in Oxford, Cambridge and London offer annually a number of entrance Scholarships, not appropriated to any special subject, and usually one or more in each College is awarded for English.

In the provincial Universities no entrance Scholarships appear to be awarded for English alone. Thus at Birmingham, as we have been informed, "there are no special entrance Scholarships in English. The Scholarships are granted on general education in which English is a compulsory subject. After the first year two Scholarships are awarded annually to the best students in the Honours Schools. English gets its fair share of these." In Durham, Scholarships are offered in English combined with another subject. At Leeds, English is one of the three "full" subjects in entrance Scholarships, and is compulsory. At University College, Reading, English is one of four subjects for entrance Scholarships.

214. Entrance Scholarships may thus be broadly divided into three Classes :—

(1) Those allocated, by direction of the founders, to particular subjects. The position of most of the "newer" subjects has been fortified in this way, but English remains at a disadvantage, in respect of such benefactions. There is here a splendid opportunity for the pious founder who may wish to do for the study of the vernacular what past benefactors have done for other subjects of study.

(2) Scholarships which may be awarded for English *or* for some other subject. Here it is essential that English should have a chance proportionate to its importance in the curriculum. In the case of the University of London Scholarships mentioned above we feel that this is not so. Classics, Mathematics, the Sciences and Economics, and History, all are definitely provided for, but English has to take part in a scramble with three modern foreign languages. This is all the more striking, as the University of London has always given prominence to the study of the mother tongue.

(3) Scholarships in which English is one of several subjects, as is usual in the provincial Universities and University Colleges. Here again it is requisite that English should be given a weight at least equal to that of any of the other subjects. And whatever the standard of excellence achieved in other subjects, every Scholarship winner should be expected to show reasonable command of expression in his own language. Where Scholarships to the Universities are awarded by Local Education Authorities on the results of Higher or Second School Examinations, courses in which English is a principal subject should receive full recognition.

215. But even more important than these entrance and pre-graduate scholarships are the Studentships or Fellowships which enable graduates to pursue their English studies to a more advanced stage. Such are the George Smith Studentship in the University of London awarded to the best student in the first class at the final examination in English Honours for the B.A. who is proceeding to the M.A. degree; and the Inglis Studentship in English open to graduates at King's College. At Birmingham a Scholarship of the same type as the George Smith Studentship, though considerably less valuable, has been recently instituted, and at Liverpool there are two "William Noble" Fellowships in English literature, awarded for purposes of research. Elsewhere certain post-graduate Scholarships or Fellowships may be awarded for English, but they are not confined to that subject.

Several of our witnesses have emphasised the great importance of multiplying these scholarships for advanced students. Thus Professor Chadwick stated that Cambridge has "abundance of endowments for post-graduate work in Classics, but practically nothing for English studies. The future of our 'Schools' of English obviously depends on the encouragement we can give to young scholars." Professor Wyld made similar representations on behalf of those primarily interested in the linguistic side of the work.

216. In endorsing these views we do not wish to stress overmuch the economic argument. It is true that we wish to see English have a fair start in the educational race; and that we are anxious for the modern "Clerk of Oxenford" to have "wher-with to scoleye," though his "twenty bokes, clad in blak and reed," may be those of Chaucer and Shakespeare, Milton and Burke, instead "of Aristotle and his philosophye." But we set greater value on the stimulus and encouragement given to English studies by benefactions public and private. Of this we may give one notable illustration. For a long time Sir Roger Newdigate's Prize for an English poem was the only reward offered to undergraduates by the University of Oxford for composition in our own language. Its financial value is comparatively slight, but how great has been its influence! The list of "Newdigate" winners includes the names of Heber and Milman, Ruskin and Matthew Arnold, not to mention those of eminent living writers. And behind these notable figures stands the multitude of undergraduates who, generation after generation, have been stimulated by the competition for the "Newdigate" to undertake the eager study and practice of the poetic art.

THESES AND RESEARCH.

217. The custom of our older Universities, since the earlier practice of disputations became obsolete, has been to confer the Bachelor of Arts degree by examination, while the M.A. degree has involved no educational test. The examination has consisted mainly in the working of written papers, but has not included a thesis or any attempt at research on the part of the undergraduate. In the curricula of the newer Universities, partly under German and American influences, the thesis holds a prominent place, and it has recently received recognition for certain purposes at Oxford and Cambridge. As examinations in English are still largely experimental

we consider that it is of great importance to distinguish between various aspects of what is often loosely termed research and to indicate broadly the appropriate type of thesis at different stages.

The English University that has attached most importance to the thesis in the curriculum of undergraduates is Liverpool. The second part of the examination for the B.A. degree in either English Language and Philology or English Literature includes a dissertation presented by the student. We have been furnished with a list of 24 of these dissertations written between 1907 and 1918, ranging from the Elizabethan period to the Victorian. Some of these have been published in *Primitiæ*, a volume of essays by former alumni of the University of Liverpool.

At Cambridge, in the examination for the English Tripos, candidates are allowed to send in a piece of original composition, not necessarily on a literary subject, of not more than 5,000 words written in their own time. If this composition is not good it is ignored; if it is good, it counts in the candidate's favour. One woman student was recently raised from a third to a second class solely on account of a remarkable piece of work that she had submitted.

The thesis for the M.A. has been given chief prominence in the examinations of the University of London, where it is the normal avenue of internal students to this degree. Some of these dissertations, written under the direction of Professors of the University, have been real contributions to knowledge. The recently instituted degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.), which may be taken in the faculties of theology, arts, science, and economics and which ranks between the M.A. and the Doctorates of Literature, &c., will be awarded upon a thesis or published work. It will doubtless become a popular avenue to the Doctorate and will make a special appeal to students from overseas.

It is thus evident that the thesis or dissertation will play an increasingly large part in examinations for

degrees below that of the Doctor of Literature or its equivalent. On certain conditions we are heartily in sympathy with this movement. Throughout our Report we have emphasised the importance of encouraging written composition. We realise that papers done under ordinary examination conditions, in a three or two hours' period, are far from giving full scope to candidates' powers of expression. Questions of health or accidental circumstances may prevent students doing themselves justice in the examination hall, or a "tardiness in nature" may make them incapable of rapid precipitation of their thoughts or their knowledge on paper. Mere memory power, again, may be disproportionately rewarded. We therefore think that the thesis is a valuable supplement to the ordinary examination method of written answers to questions with a time-limit, even at the B.A. stage, and that it should play an increasingly important part in higher examinations.

218. But we are keenly alive to the dangers of premature specialisation, and we are anxious that students should not attempt research without a sufficient general background. We should like to call attention to a passage in the evidence of Professor de Sélincourt. "After reading for English Honours for three years a student could not really know a vast literature like ours. It was a mistake to turn him off at that stage into some little side track to research in some unimportant subject simply because it had not been done before. It would be far better for him to go back, say, to his Shakespeare or Milton or any really great literature, take some obvious problem that arises out of his study of it, and concentrate upon that. On such a subject he could learn equally well the proper use of authorities, and then, in place of the normal 'Thesis' upon an obscure and profitless theme, he should write an extended and fully documented literary essay. It was easy to find suitable subjects for Historical research. With Literature the case was different. Many of the elaborate Theses on English

Literature produced by American students for their Doctorate, and afterwards published, were monuments of misdirected effort; in short, a true sense of literature as a living thing was lost, and in its place was substituted an investigation after the worst pattern of German 'research,' deadening alike to those who wrote and those who read it. The growth of this practice at our Universities was a real danger and should be guarded against." Dr. R. W. Chambers was of opinion that the practice of taking the M.A. by a thesis could not be bettered for the good student, but he had grave doubts about its suitability for the weak student, especially so far as literature was concerned. "Research in literature he would put at a late stage, but in language good research work could be done before the D.Litt. stage, under direction. The great difficulty was to find good subjects for theses which were within the power of the students and were worth doing. The false analogy of science was often misleading." Professor Saintsbury stated that "he did not care about research work until the honours course was completed. A man was not qualified for it until he had got the general atmosphere needed."

219. It is not our function to prescribe examination methods or standards to individual Universities, but we are of opinion that for the due co-ordination of higher study in English the following general principles should be borne in mind. There are three stages in the education of a student. In the first stage he has to acquire a general knowledge of his subject. This general knowledge is the indispensable basis on which all advanced work must be built. The second stage is, or should be, devoted to the acquisition of special knowledge of some definite period or part of the subject—say, for instance, the literature of the Renaissance or the 18th century. If the student intends to carry his studies further, and undertake some original work, he must during this second stage acquaint himself with the methods of investigation, which can best be taught practically and

experimentally as in science. In this stage, therefore, he ought to acquire some knowledge of the principles of literary criticism and some practice in literary composition on a large scale. That is to say, instead of writing answers to examination questions and short essays as he did in the first stage, he ought to learn by experiment how to put together a piece of critical or constructive work. As the object of this piece of composition is not to add to knowledge or to discover new facts, or arrive at new conclusions, but simply to give the student a training in the method of investigation, it cannot properly be termed research. It is not exploration of an unknown territory but observant travel through familiar country. For this training well-known problems, well-known authors, and old materials furnish adequate subjects. The third stage is the one in which the student undertakes original research—that is, attempts to investigate some definite subject or problem, and by discovering fresh materials or interpreting old materials in a new way, to throw new light on a problem or period, and so make an addition to knowledge.

These three stages are in a well-organised University marked by different degrees. The first stage, the acquisition of the general knowledge which is to serve as a foundation, is marked by the B.A. The second stage, the acquisition of special knowledge and special training, is marked by the M.A. The third stage, devoted to the work of research (in the sense of exploration), is marked by the Doctorate.

In the British Universities these distinctions between the different stages of education and the different degrees have been lost sight of or confused. The training for research is not yet efficiently organised, and the work done is frequently of inferior quality in consequence. Research, in the sense of exploration, should not be undertaken before the D.Litt. or new Ph.D. stage, in order that the special knowledge and training in the methods of investigation, necessary for the production of good work,

may be acquired before the study for the Doctorate is begun.

220. This differentiation between the various stages in the training for research work raises a further important question. Is it desirable to concentrate the most advanced stage of this training at the largest and most fully equipped Universities? One Professor of English at a Provincial University stated that "the younger Universities could take people up to the standard of a good Honours B.A. as well as Oxford or Cambridge, but they could not do, and he did not consider it their work to do, post-graduate or—as he would call it—graduate work."

On this matter again it is not our function to make detailed recommendations, but to lay down general principles. Certain requisites are, in our opinion, indispensable if a University is to provide facilities for research work in the strict sense.

(1) The materials for literary investigations, that is the books and manuscripts on which the investigator is to work, must be available in the University and the district. From that point of view London, Oxford, Cambridge, and (owing to the accessibility of the Rylands library) Manchester and Liverpool are appropriate centres for research work in literature and language. On the other hand many modern Universities and University Colleges are so inadequately equipped with the necessary materials for literary investigation that on most subjects research must be exceedingly difficult and on some impossible.

(2) The staff of professors and lecturers must be sufficient in number and quality, and not so heavily burdened with more elementary work as to render advanced teaching impossible. How is a professor to carry on research himself—and without conducting such investigations he can hardly teach others to conduct them—if lecturing, examining, and University administration occupy all his time?

(3) The possibility of developing research work in particular Universities depends largely on the previous literary training of the students resorting to each University. Oxford and Cambridge, owing to the fact that they get the flower of the Public Schools, obtain the larger part of the students who have had the elaborate literary training afforded by the Classics. Hence a greater number of students there are prepared to receive advanced teaching and to undertake literary investigations.

221. It follows from these considerations that there should be some differentiation in the work of the various Universities. The smaller and less adequately equipped and staffed Universities will find it desirable to specialise, that is to restrict themselves to limited periods or parts of English literature, in their endeavour to develop post-graduate work. After a student has taken the ordinary degree there is a certain amount of preliminary training for literary investigation which can of course be obtained at his own University; practice in literary composition on a larger scale than the writing of essays for tutors and answers to questions, some training in the use of books of reference and in bibliography, some practice in textual criticism, &c. A certain amount of advanced work should be conducted in the provincial Universities, quite apart from the question whether the research degree is to be taken there or elsewhere, It is desirable in the interest alike of teacher, student, and University. On the other hand it is equally essential that the research student should be able to transfer himself, in the latter part of his course, to the University in which he will find most materials available for the piece of research work he is undertaking.

Hence the question of the conditions of study laid down for the research degrees in the older or better equipped Universities is of great importance to the newer and smaller provincial Universities. In our opinion a Standing Committee should be appointed, consisting of representatives of the various English Universities, with

possibly some outside experts, to co-ordinate the various stages of research work in English, and the degrees awarded, and to promote the most advantageous use of the great libraries and other storehouses of materials for literary investigation in England.

222. In speaking of materials for research we wish to put on record our great concern at the prospect of the disappearance from this country of early printed books and manuscripts still remaining in private hands and indispensable for the study of important branches of English literature and language. If the difficulties in preventing the exportation of unique volumes cannot be overcome, it ought in our opinion to be compulsory for the overseas buyers to deposit photographic facsimiles of them in the principal libraries of the United Kingdom, before the books or manuscripts are allowed to leave the country.

223. We also wish, in relation to research work, to draw attention to the importance of training advanced students of English language and literature in Bibliography. There has been hitherto very little academic provision for this, apart from the Sandars lectureship at Cambridge, and the newly instituted Chair of English Bibliography at King's College, which is a part-time post held by Mr. A. W. Pollard, head of the Printed Books Department of the British Museum, and a lectureship at University College, London, held by Mr. Esdaile, another member of the British Museum Staff. The wide scope of bibliographical investigation in the present day was made clear in the evidence of Dr. W. W. Greg :—

" It is not, as often supposed, confined to the invention of printing and the classification of the products of the early presses : rather it covers the whole study of the material transmission of literature in its widest sense. Since practically all extant literature has at some time passed through a stage of material, as opposed to oral or memorial, transmission, and since the fundamental task of criticism is the establishment of the text,

bibliography has been well styled the 'grammar of literature.'

"Thus bibliography may be defined as the systematic study of the transmission of the written word whether through manuscript or print, and it aims at the evolution of a critical organon by which the utmost possible results may be extracted from the available evidence. It forms the greater and most essential part of the duty of the editor, but its value in criticism is by no means confined to the editor. It will be found of service in every field of investigation, and cannot be neglected even by the 'æsthetic' critic without loss.

"It frequently happens that the close examination of an old print or manuscript, the actual arrangement of the words on the page or the material condition of the leaves, still more frequently the comparison of different editions or different manuscripts, suggests to the bibliographical eye the solution of problems towards which literary critics have been long and blindly groping."

The witness gave some illustrations, including important results in the field of Shakespearian investigation.

We are convinced that in every University where research work in English is undertaken provision should be made for instruction in bibliography.

THE TEACHING STAFF.

224. We have frequently had occasion in this Report to emphasise the predominantly important function of the teacher in all stages of the English work. This of course applies with special force to the University sphere. Unless Professors and Lecturers of the right type and in sufficient numbers can be obtained, and provided with adequate facilities both for teaching and research, the provision of buildings, libraries, and equipment generally will be to a great extent made in vain.

225. For reasons that will be obvious from earlier passages in our Report it was not until the latter part of the 19th century that definite provision for the teaching

of English literature or language (apart from Anglo-Saxon) began to be made in the Universities of this country. It is true that a Chair of Poetry was founded at Oxford by Henry Birkenhead in 1708, but the lectures were delivered in Latin, and dealt with classical authors on the traditional lines of humanist criticism. Yet the Chair was not without influence on the study of English literature. The seventh Professor (1757–67) was Thomas Warton, the younger, whose lectures dealt with classical subjects but who did memorable service to English scholarship in his *Observations on the Faerie Queene* (1754) and his *History of English Poetry* (1774–81). Keble's lectures for the Chair (1832–41), though concerned with Greek and Latin poets and dramatists, contained valuable incidental passages on Shakespeare and other English writers. Not long afterwards the regulation by which the lectures were given in Latin was rescinded, and since Matthew Arnold's tenure of the Chair (1857–67), when he delivered lectures *On Translating Homer* and *The Study of Celtic Literature*, it has been held by a succession of distinguished critics, who have largely influenced the study of the national literature.

226. It is noteworthy that except for this part-time Oxford Chair, the academic teaching of English began in Scotland and Ireland. The Professor of Rhetoric at Edinburgh dealt with the formal side of English, as did also the Professors of Logic at Aberdeen and St. Andrews. Thus the Secretary of the University of Aberdeen states :—

"From the time of the fusion of the two Aberdeen Universities in 1860, when Logic was first taught as a subject separate from Moral Philosophy, the subject of English, chiefly English Composition, was taught by the Professor of Logic. The Chair of Logic in Aberdeen was never, to my knowledge, styled the 'Chair of Logic and Rhetoric,' but in practice, from its very inception in 1860, was conducted as such. To teach 'English' was, in fact, part of the official duty of the Logic Professor. The first Professor of Logic, Professor Bain,

who was appointed in 1860, occupied the Chair for 20 years, and during the whole of this time lectured, as is well known, on English Composition. But he did more than this, he illustrated his detailed composition lectures by frequent references to English prose and poetry in extract books compiled by himself and published for the use of the class. He did not, as far as I know, ever attempt even an outline history of English Literature as a whole, and lectures purely æsthetic and critical were not delivered by him. He did, however, add to his course a few lectures mainly expository on a few selected authors.

"Professor Minto who succeeded him in the Chair of Logic in 1880, and whose name is well known as a literary critic and also especially as a historian of English Literature, greatly developed the English teaching. His main class-work was still with Logic, but he did not confine himself to English Composition, giving his students not only a general sketch of the whole field of English Literature, but often dealing particularly and critically with particular authors."

A Chair of English Language and Literature was founded at Glasgow in 1861, at Aberdeen in 1893, and at St. Andrews in 1897.

When the three Queen's Colleges in Belfast, Cork and Galway were founded in 1845, Chairs of "History and English Literature" were established. Owing partly to the conditions of Irish education, Literature rather than History became from the first the chief subject of these Chairs and remained so till 1908, when under the Irish Universities Act separate Chairs of English Language and Literature and of History were established. In the University of Dublin (Trinity College) a Chair of English Literature, of which Edward Dowden was the first holder, was founded in 1867.

227. The first University Commission of 1850 did nothing to promote the study of English at Oxford or Cambridge. A result of the second Commission of

1877 was the foundation at Oxford of the Merton Professorship of English Language and Literature in 1885. Owing to the choice of the first Professor the Chair became identified with the teaching of language, but in 1904 its linguistic side was transferred to the Rawlinson Chair of Anglo-Saxon, and the Merton Professorship of English Literature was instituted. In 1908 the Goldsmiths' Company founded a Readership in English, and afterwards two University Lectureships in the subject were established. In 1920 an additional Chair of English Language and Literature was instituted.* There are also about a dozen lecturers and tutors, chiefly connected with the Women's Colleges.

The foundation of the Elrington and Bosworth Chair of Anglo-Saxon at Cambridge in 1878 has been already mentioned. A lectureship in English, which is held on a five years' tenure, was instituted in 1896. The King Edward VII. Chair of English Literature was founded in 1911.

As compared with Oxford, the Colleges at Cambridge have played a larger part, and the University a smaller, in the organisation of English teaching. The Clark lectureship at Trinity College (established in 1878), to which the election is annual, has been held both by resident and non-resident scholars and critics. At both the men's and women's colleges there are a number of lecturers and supervisors, some of whom are officially "recognised" by the University.

228. While English is a new study at Oxford and Cambridge, it occupied from the first an important place in the examinations of the University of London. But except for the Quain Chair at University College, there was till recently a comparatively small provision of teaching posts in English. Mainly through the grants of the London County Council, there are now University Chairs of English at University, King's, and Bedford

* It bears the original title of "The Merton Professorship," which has been transferred from the English Literature Chair.

Colleges, Readerships at University and King's, and a large number of lectureships of different grades in these and other Colleges.

In the provincial Universities and University Colleges English was at first in nearly every case one of the subjects of a composite Chair. Thus at Owen's College, Manchester (since 1903 the University of Manchester), there was, from 1875 to 1889, a Chair of History and English Literature. In 1890 a separate lectureship in English was established, and in 1900 this became a Professorship. There had been a separate lectureship on English language from 1875, which was raised to a Chair in 1880.

At University College, Liverpool (since 1903 the University of Liverpool) a "King Alfred" Chair of Literature and History was founded in 1881. On the establishment of a Chair of Ancient History in 1884 the King Alfred Chair became a Chair of English Literature. A lectureship in English Language established in 1897 was converted into a Chair of English and Philology in 1904. In 1906 an independent Lecturer in English Literature was appointed, and in 1919 a second Chair in the subject, the Andrew Cecil Bradley Chair, was founded in place of the lectureship. In addition a lectureship on Poetry, tenable for five years, has been recently instituted, and is now held by Mr. Lascelles Abercrombie.

Similar developments have taken place elsewhere. Thus at Armstrong College (now the Newcastle Division of the University of Durham) there was in 1895 a Chair of Literature and Classics. Since 1899 there has been an independent Chair of English Language and Literature, and more recently two lectureships. At Durham itself there has been a Chair of English Language and Literature since 1910, and an additional lectureship since 1916. At the Yorkshire College (now the University of Leeds) there have developed out of the Chair of Modern Literature and History founded in 1877 a Professorship of English Language and Literature, a Readership in English Language, and three lectureships.

229. The provision of University posts for teachers of English, especially Chairs of Literature, has thus been mainly the growth of the last 20 years. Much has been done during this period, but much more remains to be done. We consider that, with a study that is so rapidly developing, it would be unwise to attempt to make any forecast of the number and nature of the additional posts that will be required even in the early future. But we wish to emphasise the following considerations.

(1) English must henceforth be recognised as a study that has a first claim on the support of every English University, old or new. It will be the main source of culture of the millions of English-speaking men and women in the British Empire and the United States. Hence it will be the duty of the Universities of this country to make due provision for their English Department, not as a new-comer with doubtful claims, but as a legitimate heir too long kept by circumstances out of his rights.

(2) The academic English Staff will thus in a special sense be "the teachers of the teachers" of the great English-speaking democracies. But they will also have special responsibilities to the research and post-graduate students in our own language and literature who are flocking in increasing numbers to the Universities of this country, especially Oxford, Cambridge and London. They will have to be adequately qualified, both in status and number, to guide and supervise this rapidly growing department of English work.

(3) From the evidence that has been given to us the more immediate need would appear not to be so much for additional Chairs as for a reorganisation of Staff that would give greater freedom to Professors in choosing the subjects of their lectures, and greater leisure to lecture, research, and write. It is, of course, beneficial to students to come into personal touch with their Professors through tutorial work, but the bulk of this work should be left to well-qualified assistants. A liberal additional provision of Readerships, Fellowships, and Lectureships in

English is required which would enable younger men to devote themselves to the highly important tutorial work of the English department, while they are beginning to win their spurs in the lecture-room or the field of research.

The conditions in American Universities are in many ways different from those in our own, but we may mention that in these Universities, where the staffs of the English departments are much larger than in this country, the tendency seems to be to multiply the assistant and junior posts and not the Professorships in the full sense. Thus from details kindly furnished by the Chairman of the Department of English in the University of Wisconsin we learn that in this department there are 53 teachers, including two Professors, 6 associate Professors, 6 assistant Professors, 27 Instructors and 12 Assistants. In the University of California, from which we have also received information, the 25 teachers in the English Department include 5 Professors, 2 associate Professors, 6 assistant Professors, 7 Instructors and 5 Assistants.

230. There is a growing practice of supplementing professorial teaching by courses or single lectures given by specialists not on the academic staff. We think that this practice deserves encouragement, and that a sum should be allocated to the English Department of every University for the purpose. Outside the purely academic sphere the stimulating effect of occasional addresses by experts in various branches of English study has been demonstrated by the success of the London County Council courses for teachers, and the lectures given in a number of provincial centres by representatives of the English Association.

In view of the growth of the tutorial class movement and of adult education generally, which carries with it an increasing demand for courses in English literature, the influence and responsibilities of English departments at Universities, especially in the provinces, are likely to be extended considerably in the near future. If these

responsibilities be shirked, valuable and important work will either be held up for want of teachers or fall into the hands of those ill qualified to deal with it. Much may be gained by close association of this external teaching with the internal activities of the department. But if, as we anticipate, a large increase of staff will be necessary in years to come in order to cope with this development, it will not be essential or even desirable that all the members of this staff should be teachers in the University. With classes in places remote it is often easier to make use of good secondary school teachers or training college lecturers with the necessary academic qualifications; such teachers, most of whom can find time to take at least one evening class a week, form a convenient reservoir of supply which has hardly as yet been properly tapped, The point, however, we wish to make here is that, from whatever source the teachers are drawn, their work with adult students should be regarded as University work; the Professor of English should make it part of his duties to keep in close touch with them, periodical meetings of tutors and the professor, for the interchange of ideas and the discussion of problems, should be held—in short that the extension and tutorial classes should be regarded as an integral part of the English Department.

231. We have been furnished with particulars of the stipends of the English Chairs in the Universities and University Colleges of the country. In a number of cases the salary is £800, but in some instances it is £900 and two Chairs have a stipend of £1,000. On the descending scale the figures are £700, £600, and, in one or two instances, £500.

Taking into account the fluctuations in the value of money at the present time, the variety of conditions in the various Universities and Colleges, and the fact that some Chairs, have special endowments we do not think it advisable to specify any sum as the normal or the minimum salary to be attached to a Chair of English. But in fixing such a salary two principles should be borne

in mind. (1) The endowment of an English Chair should be at least equal to that of any other humanistic Chair in the particular institution. It should be impossible in the future for a modern provincial University to advertise side by side vacant Chairs of Greek and English in which a substantially higher salary was attached to the former than to the latter, though the students taking Greek would necessarily be far fewer than those concerned with English. (2) Account should be taken of the high rate of salaries now payable to the Heads and assistant staffs of Secondary Schools under the Burnham scale, and of the fact that these salaries carry non-contributory pensions. Financial considerations will never be the chief factor in the attraction of University Chairs, but it is a matter of the greatest moment that holders of them should not be unduly penalised, and that the supply of well-qualified candidates for vacancies should not be limited by economic pressure. It may, we hope, be taken for granted that an important Chair of English in the United Kingdom will not be advertised again at a salary of £300.

Posts under professorial rank range from Readerships in London University Colleges at £700, and the Goldsmiths' Readership at Oxford at £600, to lectureships of various grades, with stipends from £400 to £200. It is in the case of the junior posts particularly that the new scales for secondary school teachers will attract men and women away from University work unless salaries are substantially improved. The question of tenure is also of importance. Professors are usually appointed for life, or to a pensionable age. But Readers and Lecturers as a rule hold their posts for a definite period ranging from five years to one and are then eligible for re-election. We fully approve of posts that are really temporary, of which the Chair of Poetry at Oxford or the Clark Lectureship at Trinity College, Cambridge, are well-known examples, and which are intended to be filled by a succession of specialists for a limited period. But when a Readership or Lectureship (as has been often the case) is permanent in all but name,

it is not certain that the balance of advantage under present conditions is in favour of the prevailing system of re-election at stated periods. After an adequate period of probation, these posts might perhaps be on the same tenure as Professorships.

Every University must, of course, consider its own needs and resources in making provision for its teaching of English. But it should bear in mind that the subject is one of peculiar national importance, and that, as one of our professorial witnesses put the matter, what is wanted is organisation on a national scale. In any plans for future development of their English departments, University institutions should consider not only their particular or local requirements but the rapidly expanding place of English studies in the life of this country and indeed of all parts of the English-speaking world.

CHAPTER VIII.

LITERATURE AND ADULT EDUCATION.

LITERATURE AND THE NATION.

232. We have called the University the apex of the educational edifice. From another point of view it may be called the inner shrine. But around the edifice lies what the mediæval poet called the "faire felde ful of folke." Few of the folk pass beyond the outer court of the temple, though all must travel along the highway of life's pilgrimage which runs up to and beyond it. What has English, and especially English literature, for the wayfaring man who misses the scholar's introduction?

> For trewely, comfort ne mirthe is noon
> To ryde by the weye doumb as a stoon.

It is a question, we believe, involving grave national issues, and we have given much anxious thought to it.

233. The situation, as it was presented to us, is gloomy, though not entirely without the elements of hope. We were told that the working classes, especially those belonging to organised labour movements, were antagonistic to, and contemptuous of, literature, that they regarded it "merely as an ornament, a polite accomplishment, a subject to be despised by really virile men." Literature, in fact, seems to be classed by a large number of thinking working men with antimacassars, fish-knives and other unintelligible and futile trivialities of "middle-class culture," and, as a subject of instruction, is suspect as an attempt "to side-track the working-class movement." We regard the prevalence of such opinions as a serious matter, not merely because it means the alienation of an important section of the population from the "comfort" and "mirthe" of literature, but chiefly because it points to a morbid condition of the body politic which if not taken in hand may be followed by lamentable consequences. For if literature be, as we

believe, an embodiment of the best thoughts of the best minds, the most direct and lasting communication of experience by man to men, a fellowship which "binds together by passion and knowledge the vast empire of human society, as it is spread over the whole earth, and over all time," then the nation of which a considerable portion rejects this means of grace, and despises this great spiritual influence, must assuredly be heading to disaster.

234. Before seeking for remedies, we attempted to diagnose the malady. Two of our witnesses attributed it to defects in the elementary school of 30 or 40 years ago, when those who are now adult working men and women were receiving education under the old Code. "In those days education was purely utilitarian; its object was limited to giving children the instrument for earning a living. Literature was not used in business, and therefore did not enter the curriculum. No advice was given on the subject of reading. A school library was a rarity. Poetry was merely a repetition lesson, varied with questions on the meaning of isolated words and phrases. It was not uncommon for children to have two 'poetry' lessons each week for a year, and during the whole of that time read no more than one poem. When children left school at the age of thirteen they carried with them a detestation of poetry which most of them retained through life." No doubt there is much truth in this, and were it the whole truth time would bring the remedy, since a new generation of workers is now coming up from schools where literature, though still lacking its due prestige, is yet taught far more satisfactorily than it was a quarter of a century ago. Unfortunately the new generation appears to have no more use for literature than the old, if we are to credit the evidence of another witness. "The attitude of the workers towards English and artistic studies," he said, "is a threefold one. One school, the oldest, will frankly deny the value of English or of any education whatsoever;

a second, the product of a later decade, wants to know what value such studies have in the understanding of life, in making the world around seem clearer; the third and youngest school frankly denies the possibility of any good. They see education mainly as something to equip them to fight their capitalistic enemies. In the words of one young worker: 'Yes, what you say is all right—but will that sort of stuff bring us more bread and cheese?' Of these schools, the first is the most hopeless. It consists of the prosperous older worker and the self-made man, found too often on many education committees, who have had no inspiration or apparent benefit from the elementary schools. The other two are full of promise. Members of both are readers, often great readers, and both are alive and interested in matters outside themselves." The younger worker, the product of a better educational system, is very much alive; he is a student—especially of economics; yet he takes no interest in literature, because he feels that it has nothing to contribute towards the solution of "the social problem" in which all his thoughts are centred.

235. This state of mind is not a new thing in history, and even goes back as far as Plato. It finds a parallel in the contempt for "poets, pipers, players, jesters and such-like caterpillars of the commonwealth" expressed by puritans of the 16th and 17th centuries, and in the hostility towards "the culture of capitalism" now prevalent in Bolshevist Russia.* It would seem, indeed, as if at certain periods or phases of human development social, political or religious movements become so all-absorbing that art and literature, which interpret the universal through the experience of the individual, tend to be regarded as trivial and unimportant in comparison. And such concentration, if sustained, may in the end influence literature itself. It undoubtedly did so in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, the writers of which dealt mainly with subjects which were of a collective

* Compare the attitude of Whitman and Tolstoy to Shakespeare.

interest to the race at large, and produced poetry which had ceased to concern itself with men but rather attempted to be "essays on Man." Indications of a similar literary trend are not lacking to-day, though we are inclined to think that its effects will be temporary. We are at any rate convinced that "the social problem" is not directly the business of literature, and that those who conceive it to be so have failed to appreciate the true function of literature. On the other hand we believe that, if rightly presented, poetry will be recognised by the most ardent social reformers as of value, because while it contributes no specific solution of the social problem it endows the mind with power and sanity; because, in a word, it enriches personality.

What is it that hinders this recognition? What is it that stands in the way of the "right presentation"? These, we found, were the central questions of our inquiry. "In the mediæval world," we were told by another witness, "the workman controlled himself and his work, but since the fifteenth century he had gradually come more and more under discipline, until he was now merely a means to the end of production, and so his working-life had lost all significance in relation to life as a whole. That condition, which had been imposed upon him and which he called wage-slavery, was the ultimate cause of all social unrest. Because of it there was no longer any literature springing from the lives of the people as in the mediæval age, when they sang ballads and took part, in their guilds, in plays and pageants. Literature now expressed the point of view, for the most part, of the middle and upper classes, and working men felt that any attempt to teach them literature or art was an attempt to impose upon them the culture of another class. But the working class was by no means indifferent to literature, though they wished to pick and choose. . . . Burns," said this Scottish witness, "was better known in Yorkshire than in Scotland, and appealed to working men because he made them feel with him

the essential truth of things. Jack London was read by everybody because he represented life as a struggle—a social struggle or a struggle against Nature—in which one gained success by co-operation, and that was exactly what life meant to the working classes. The important thing in lecturing on literature to these men was to bring out the connection between literature and life."

We are not concerned to discuss the historical and economic explanation set forth in this statement, but we are bound to acknowledge the essential truth of its assertion that, whatever be the cause, modern literature, including so-called democratic poets like Wordsworth and Shelley, (i) no longer springs from the life of the people, and (ii) is not generally recognised as having any direct bearing upon their life. These two factors are, in our view, sufficient in themselves to account for the present-day attitude of the working-classes towards literature.

236 At the same time we are unable to subscribe to the dictum that literature, as generally interpreted, is a part of "middle-class culture." We sincerely wish it were. We find, on the contrary, an indifference among middle-class persons to the claims of literature, even more disheartening than the open hostility which we are told exists among certain circles of working-class opinion. Here, quite as much as there, is to be found a striking contrast with mediæval conditions. No doubt there were Hotspurs in those times, who would

> ". . . . . rather be a kitten and cry mew
> Than one of these same metre ballad-mongers";

but the almost interminable "cycles of romance," together with the honour paid to minstrel and troubadour, are a sufficient indication of how men whiled away the long hours of winter in mead-hall and castle. Moreover, this section of mediæval literature was intimately concerned with the ideals and occupations of the public for which it was composed, that is to say its theme was chivalry and its chief subject-matter fighting. Does poetry play anything like the same part in the domestic

economy of the average well-to-do household to-day? The question answers itself. Children at the Secondary or Public School learn to pay a certain lip-service to literature, but it is safe to say that more than 90 per cent. of middle-class people have ceased to read poetry in adult life. Why is this? We can find no more satisfactory answer than that already given in dealing with the attitude of the working man, namely, that poetry is not reocgnised as having any vital connection with a workaday world.

237. It is natural for man to delight in poetry; the history of mediæval society, to say nothing of all primitive societies, proves this. Further, we claim that no personality can be complete, can see life steadily and see it whole, without that unifying influence, that purifying of the emotions, which art and literature can alone bestow. It follows from what we have said above that the bulk of our people, of whatever class, are unconsciously living starved existences, that one of the richest fields of our spiritual being is left uncultivated—not indeed barren, for the weeds of literature have never been so prolific as in our day. It is easy to blame Education for this, but Education cannot proceed far in advance of the general outlook of its age. The true cause lies deeper, is rooted among the very foundations of our civilisation. Yet we believe that it belongs to a transitory phase of human development and will, therefore, in course of time cease to operate.

No one who regards the literature of the middle ages can fail to notice two obvious facts about it, namely, (i) its close association with the traditions and history (as then understood) of the society which rejoiced in it, and (ii) its constant preoccupation with the vocation—whether in fighting, "in dyking or in delving or travailing in prayer"—of the particular public which it addressed. The same is true of Greek literature. Both sprang from the life of the people and gave to that life its spiritual sanction, together with a sense of stability, by linking it

up with the immemorial past. If, on the other hand, we inquire why, for example, the United States of America, with all its intellectual vigour and its tremendous achievements in other directions, has not been able as yet to produce a literature which can in any sense be called national,* we find the explanation in the fact that its origins are too recent and the occupations of its people too "modern" to have taken upon them that colouring of the imagination which must lie upon the poet's palette before he can make them the objects of his art. To adopt the language of Wordsworth, the traditions and activities of the great society of the Republic of the West are not yet sufficiently "familiarised to men . . . to put on, as it were, a form of flesh and blood," and therefore the poet cannot "lend his divine spirit to aid the transfiguration" or "welcome the Being thus produced, as a dear and genuine inmate of the household of man." In our own country the contrast is less glaring, though scarcely less real. We have a traditional culture, which comes down to us from the time of the Renaissance, and our literature, which is rich, draws its life-blood therefrom. But the enormous changes in the social life and industrial occupations of the vast majority of our people, changes begun in the sixteenth century and greatly accentuated by the so-called Industrial Revolution, have created a gulf between the world of poetry and that world of everyday life from which we receive our "habitual impressions." Here, we believe, lies the root cause of the indifference and hostility towards literature which is the disturbing feature of the situation, as we have explored it. Here too lies our hope; since the time cannot be far distant when the poet, who "follows wheresoever he can find an atmosphere of sensation in which to move his wings," will invade this vast new territory, and so once more bring sanctification and joy into the sphere of common life. It is not in man to hasten

* Whitman, who seems to us a representative American, is apparently repudiated in America.

this consummation. The wind bloweth where it listeth. All we can do here is to draw attention to the existing divorce, and to suggest measures that may lead to reunion.

238. The interim, we feel, belongs chiefly to the professors of English literature. The rise of modern Universities has accredited an ambassador of poetry to every important capital of industrialism in the country, and upon his shoulders rests a responsibility greater we think than is as yet generally recognised. The Professor of Literature in a University should be—and sometimes is, as we gladly recognise—a missionary in a more real and active sense than any of his colleagues. He has obligations not merely to the students who come to him to read for a degree, but still more towards the teeming population outside the University walls, most of whom have not so much as "heard whether there be any Holy Ghost." The fulfilment of these obligations means propaganda work, organisation and the building up of a staff of assistant missionaries.* But first, and above all, it means a right attitude of mind, a conviction that literature and life are in fact inseparable, that literature is not just a subject for academic study, but one of the chief temples of the human spirit, in which all should worship. We say, "all," for there is a tendency to suppose that literature is the preserve of the "cultured," a tendency from which Matthew Arnold, the apostle of culture, was himself not entirely free. "The great men of culture," he wrote, "are those who have had a passion for diffusing, for making prevail, for carrying from one end of society to the other, the best knowledge, the best ideas of their time; who have laboured to divest knowledge of all that was harsh, uncouth, difficult, abstract, professional, exclusive; to humanise it, to make it efficient outside the clique of the cultivated and learned, yet still remaining the *best* knowledge and thought of the time, and a true source, therefore, of sweetness and light." A noble

* *See* § 230.

ideal, yet one that is incomplete without Henry Sidgwick's comment upon it: "If any culture really has what Mr. Arnold in his finest mood calls its noblest element, the passion for propagating itself, for making itself prevail, then let it learn to call nothing common or unclean. It can only propagate itself by shedding the light of its sympathy liberally; by learning to love common people and common things, to feel common interests. Make people feel that their own poor life is ever so little beautiful and poetical; then they will begin to turn and seek after the treasures of beauty and poetry outside and above it. Culture, like all spiritual gifts, can only be propagated by enthusiasm; and by enthusiasm that has got rid of asperity, that has become sympathetic; that has got rid of Pharisaism, and become humble." The ambassadors of poetry must be humble, they must learn to call nothing common or unclean—not even the local dialect, the clatter of the factory, or the smoky pall of our industrial centres.

We wish here to indicate some of the instruments that lie ready to the hand of missionaries imbued with this spirit: such are the University Extension Movement, the Workers' Educational Association and Evening Classes arranged by Local Education Authorities.* Interesting experiments of the kind last named have been made in recent years, especially within the area of London. They are not, we believe, generally known in the country at large, and as they are closely connected with the evening technical work already dealt with in Chapter V. and lead in some measure up to the work of university extension, it will be well to speak of them first.

* The World Association for Adult Education is a sort of international clearing house which has at present no intimate connection with education in this country, nor specially aims at the teaching of English. But it is a movement which has life in it, and its influence in the future may be considerably increased.

LITERATURE AND THE LOCAL EDUCATION AUTHORITY.—ENGLISH IN EVENING EDUCATION IN LONDON.

239. In the Final Report of the Adult Education Committee there is a tendency to minimise the part that can be profitably played by Local Education Authorities in this sphere of education, as contrasted with the Universities and voluntary agencies. Thus Chapter VI., paragraph 188, of the Report contains the following statement :—

"The fact that Local Education Authorities are concerned chiefly with children and adolescents, and, in a less degree, with older students whose predominant interest is vocational instruction has moulded the character of educational administration, and given rise to a tradition which is far from favourable to the development of adult non-vocational education. . . . The age and experience of the vast majority of the pupils under their care, on the one hand, and the limitation imposed by the utilitarian objects of technical education on the other have combined to produce a tradition which has been unsympathetic to humane adult education. The fact that there has been little demand made upon Local Authorities by adults for classes in non-vocational subjects is attributable not so much to lackof desire as to lack of knowledge concerning the possibilities of obtaining suitable educational facilities from Educational Authorities and to lack of confidence in their established methods."

While we recognise, of course, the general truth of this statement, we feel that insufficient account has been taken of some recent developments in the work of Local Educational Authorities, and of the possibilities of fruitful co-operation between them and the Universities and autonomous institutions. We have already spoken of one such development at Huddersfield.* But in further illustration of these points we think it well to refer to the

* § 151.

organisation of the teaching of English in Evening Classes in London. An endeavour has there been made to provide suitably graded instruction in the subject from the standard of the Junior Evening Institute up to that of the University Honours degree.

240. Most of what has been previously said in Chapter V., "English in Commercial and Industrial Life," with reference to Evening Continuation Schools applies to the teaching of English in London Junior Evening Institutes, which are attended by students between 14 and 18 years of age The fact that English is now compulsory in all commercial or technical courses for students aged from 14 to 16 has led to a considerable expansion of the classes in the subject. In the Session 1920–1 no fewer than 1,775 junior classes in English (including about 100 in dramatic literature) were opened in London Evening Institutes. The syllabus of work includes reading and recitation, oral and written composition, and the study of such literature as is suitable to the varying attainments and needs of the different classes.

The main problem is to find an adequate supply of sufficiently qualified teachers for this difficult and exacting work. The disrepute into which the teaching of English in Evening Classes has often fallen arose in the main from the fact that the instruction was frequently an extension into this sphere of the formal methods which had already done so much mischief in the day schools. Hence great efforts have been made to recruit for the panel of instructors in English in Junior Evening Institutes men and women with special capacities for the work. Candidates who appeared to possess suitable scholastic and other qualifications have been personally interviewed, and in many cases their appointment has been made conditional on their attendance at one or other of the courses in English included in the London County Council's scheme of Classes for Teachers. The result has been distinctly beneficial, and the level of the work

has gradually risen. But the difficulty of obtaining competent teachers is thereby increased, and the supply at present falls below the demand. Among the reasons for welcoming the Day Continuation Schools, which will in due course absorb most of the work of the Junior Institutes, is the shortage of competent teachers of English prepared to undertake part-time duties in the evening.

241. But when the continuation school system is fully established, the need for evening education for adults, above 18 years of age, will not be diminished but intensified. In London the Local Authority makes direct provision for this adult education in its Senior Evening Institutes. In these institutes in the session 1920–1 there have been opened 359 classes in English and 83 in literature (including dramatic literature). The English classes carry on to a higher stage the similar work in the Junior Institutes, and aim at improving the students' powers of composition and expression. Many of them have a semi-vocational object and include précis and indexing, in preparation for Civil Service and kindred examinations. But even in such classes the endeavour is to make the vocational work an instrument of real training in the art of writing, and an avenue to reading for its own sake.

The English literature classes are purely cultural but many of them are held at the Commercial Institutes, so that they may be attended by persons who are studying foreign languages or advanced commercial subjects. Others are held at those Women's Institutes where there is a considerable attendance of adult students. An increasing number of them are likely to be opened at the Literary Institutes which we welcome as an important recent contribution by the Local Authority to adult humanistic education in London. There are now 11 of these Institutes, with an enrolment of about 3,000. Their curriculum includes, in addition to English literature, historical, philosophical and other subjects outside our terms of reference, but we feel that they can help to give

practical effect to that wide interpretation of English study which governs this Report.

242. Among the literature classes there is a group of "cycle" courses which calls for special notice. To give those attending Senior Evening Institutes and certain other "higher institutions" the opportunity of systematic literary study, cycles of six sessional courses consisting of 25 lectures and classes were instituted in 1906–7, which, with some modifications, continue to-day.

The courses are at present as follows:—(1) Shakespeare, (2) Cavalier and Puritan literature, (3) The literature of the eighteenth century, (4) The Period of the Romantic Revival, (5) Aspects of Victorian Literature, (6) Modern English Literature. Outside of the cycles, but connected with the scheme are some literary courses of a more general type. Even during the years of the War the scheme was kept in being, and the enrolment at the 30 courses in 1920–21 is the largest since the work began. Students who attend a specified number of lectures and classes and write essays to the satisfaction of the lecturer are awarded a certificate.

A point which we wish to emphasise is that this "cycle literature scheme has formed a basis for linking the Evening Classes of the London County Council with the University of London Diploma courses in literature described in section 248 below. The University Extension Board offers annually 10 exhibitions for the Diploma courses to "cycle" literature students, on the nomination of the London County Council. Many of those so nominated have gained the Diploma and through the joint action of the University and the Education Authority have been enabled to pursue a systematic study of English Literature while carrying out their ordinary avocations.

This co-operation is seen in another and wider form in the relations of the London County Council to the Evening School of English at King's College. The Council

makes through the Senate of the University a grant to this School, which is the most important centre of evening academic work in English. Its activities include public lectures by the Professor; classes for the Diploma, and for English in pass and honours examinations; and semi-tutorial guidance in Bibliography and in the work for M.A. theses. The London County Council has at its disposal annually a specified number of "free places" in this School of English, which it awards to teachers in elementary, secondary, or technical schools who desire to improve their literary qualifications. The value set upon this opportunity is proved by the large number of applications for the free places, especially for the Diploma Course. These applications are greatly in excess of the present provision, which we should be glad to see extended, At the same time we hope that the School will always include, as at present, a considerable number of fee-paying students.

Sir Israel Gollancz in his evidence stated that "better work was done by some of the Diploma students than by many pass students who in addition to English must take three other subjects. In range the Diploma work was altogether more restricted than what was required for honours, the amount of Old English being reduced to a minimum; but the papers in literature as far as they went compared favourably with the average honours work." He also stated that more M.A. and advanced work was done in the evening than in the day. It may be mentioned that one of the M.A. students, a secondary school mistress, gained the "Rose Crawshay" prize of the British Academy, and another, formerly a training college lecturer, is now a Reader in English in the University.

Evening academic work in English for pass and honours degrees is also done on a considerable scale at Birkbeck College, which has recently become a School of the University; and general courses in literature or classes in English

for matriculation are held at a number of institutions aided by the London County Council, such as the Regent Street Polytechnic, the City of London College, the Working Men's College, Morley College, and Toynbee Hall.

243. The facilities for the general study of literature in the capital of the Empire—the birthplace of Chaucer and Spenser, of Milton and Keats—must always be a matter of national concern. But there are also two special reasons why we have given this sketch of the organisation of evening teaching of English in London. In the first place it illustrates how a system of evening adult education may help to provide teachers of English, and may improve the qualifications of those already engaged in this work. The problem mentioned above of finding competent instructors in literature for evening classes and the new day continuation schools would have been even more difficult than it is had not the diploma, " cycle " and other literature courses, as well as the classes for teachers, offered such varied facilities to teachers anxious to specialise but unable for one reason or another to study for degrees. And some have been enabled, as has been seen, to take degrees or proceed to post-graduate work.

But more important from our point of view in this chapter is the fact that the London Education Authority partly in its own institutions, partly in alliance with the University and other autonomous bodies, has given opportunities after working hours for the study of the mother-tongue and its literature at stages ranging from that of the work of adolescents at a Junior Institute to University honours courses. So far as we can gather from the information supplied to us this scheme of co-operation, on an extensive scale, is at present confined to London. We think that some of its features, with the necessary modifications, might well be reproduced in other large centres by arrangement between the Education Authority and the local University. We feel convinced that the problem of adult education in literature is at

once so important and so difficult that it should be attacked by all the forces that the community in its civic and academic aspects can jointly bring to bear.

LITERATURE IN UNIVERSITY EXTENSION CLASSES.

244. The history of the University Extension Movement since its inception at Cambridge in 1873, in London in 1876, and at Oxford in 1878 has been sketched in the Adult Education Committee's Report (paragraphs 36–9). We are here concerned with the movement only in its relation to the teaching of English Literature. For various reasons that subject offered a specially favourable field for University Extension work. English had not yet a recognised place in the degree examinations of Oxford and Cambridge, and the study of the subject in the new University Colleges was in a tentative stage. Thus University Extension lectures and classes were almost the first attempt to fill a gap in our higher education and they did a service in promoting the study of our national literature which should never be forgotten. Such men as the late Professor Churton Collins who for years laboured in this cause, with scanty reward and no official academic recognition, deserved well of the republic. And it was no slight advantage that most of the lecturers had been trained on the broad lines of classical culture, and were thus able to deal with English letters in their wider aspects and relations.

245. The disadvantage inherent in the University Extension system that it has no fixed habitat, and cannot therefore accumulate equipment or "plant," affects the study of literature probably less than that of any other subject. Stimulus and inspiration are here the main factors, especially in the pioneer stages, and they were abundantly forthcoming. But, as not infrequently happens, they found their chief response in a quarter different from that originally anticipated.

The promoters of the movement were anxious to carry the advantages of University education to the masses; the system was intended to be in the best sense democratic. But the literature courses at any rate, attracted little support from the body of working-men though there were some remarkable individual exceptions. The reason may be found partly in that prevalent attitude of the working-classes to literature which we have spoken of above; partly in the lack of that organised support from the side of Labour, which the Workers' Educational Association has since supplied, and with which we deal below.

Hence the literature courses found their audiences chiefly among women of the middle class. But this fact by no means prevented them from being valuable. Some 30 or 40 years ago the higher education of women in this country had still a somewhat precarious footing, and the facilities it could offer were limited. It was therefore an invaluable opportunity to thousands of women in London and still more in large provincial towns or in country districts to have lectures of high quality brought within their reach, and to have opportunities of writing essays (sometimes of remarkable merit) on the subjects of the courses. And, as we can see to-day, this has proved to be a benefit not only to individuals but to the community. Many of the women who now have the right to vote at elections, and to influence the policy of the country have learnt in University Extension classes to understand and appreciate more fully those national ideals and traditions which find in our literature their highest expression.

246. Nor will the need for these classes be less in the future. Only a small percentage of the women anxious to follow some course of higher study can attend our overcrowded Universities and University Colleges. Very many will therefore continue to find in the University Extension courses the chief provision for the systematic study of English literature to which new political and

social conditions have given unprecedented importance in the education of women.

This would, in our opinion, be in itself at the present time sufficient justification for generous treatment of University Extension work by the Universities themselves, the Board of Education, and Local Education Authorities. We have therefore given the matter prominence. But we do not of course wish to suggest that University Extension lectures on literature are intended only for one sex. The tutorial classes in English Literature, attended chiefly by men, are spoken of below. The literature lectures at the Summer meetings held at Oxford, Cambridge and London, attract large numbers of students of both sexes. And among the courses arranged by the Y.M.C.A. Universities Committee for the military forces at home and abroad those on literature were not the least successful.

247. At home, during the war years, the attention of students was, as might be expected, partly diverted from literature to other subjects, especially historical or social. This is shown clearly in some figures supplied to us by the Secretary to the Oxford University Extension Delegacy :—

Year.	Number of Courses in English Literature.	Average Attendance.	Number of Courses in other Subjects.	Average Attendance.
1913–14	30	2,944	101	9,635
1915–16	7	280	74	7,434
1917–18	11	990	47	6,023
1919–20	50	4,443	61	6,701

The figures in the reports which have been sent to us by the Secretary to the University of Cambridge Local Examinations and Lectures Syndicate show an even

more notable decline in the number of literature courses during the war :—

Year.	Number of Courses in English Literature.	Average Attendance.	Number of Courses in other Subjects.	Average Attendance.
1913–14	13	1,882	59	7,551
1915–16	4	450	40	5,674
1917–18	2	332	38	5,944
1919–20	18	2,311	59	8,065

The figures supplied by the Registrar of the University of London Extension Board show the influence of the War on English Literature courses in a less marked degree :—

Year.	Number of Courses in English Literature.	Terminal Entries.	Number of Courses in other Subjects.	Terminal Entries.
1913–14	24	3,093	105	9,139
1915–16	13	1,417	90	5,136
1917–18	10	1,020	67	3,964
1919–20	20	3,218	110	8,234*

If the returns for 1913–14 and 1919–20 are taken as those, on the whole, of normal years, (though the very large number of literature courses in the Oxford list in 1919–20 is probably in part due to a post-war reaction) the students of English literature form about one-fourth of those in regular attendance at Oxford, Cambridge and London University Extension lectures, who form a body of well over 30,000. If we add the students in tutorial literature classes, and those attending courses organised by some of the provincial Universities, it may be said

* In all the above tables, to simplify the figures, sessional, terminal and short courses have been grouped together. Tutorial Classes, which are dealt with below, are not included.

in round numbers that some 10,000 persons are being guided from year to year in their study of English writers by University Extension lecturers.

248. While we are not inclined to rate slightly the advantage of the movement to those who merely attend the lectures, provided they do so regularly and follow a course of reading on the subject that is being treated, we sympathise with the efforts of the University Extension Authorities to provide opportunities of more intensive study for those who wish to pursue it. Of these the most notable are the courses for the Diplomas in the Humanities awarded by the University of London. These Diplomas include one in English Language and Literature which is awarded on the results of three years' attendance at lectures and classes and at a "seminar" in the fourth year, with paper work throughout the period of study, and examinations at the end of each session and of the complete four years' course. The classes for this Diploma are held at King's College, and we have already quoted Sir Israel Gollancz's favourable testimony to the work of the students, and drawn attention to the support given to the classes by the London County Council. The Diploma courses are, in our opinion, to be welcomed as opening an avenue of literary study under academic direction to many students, engaged in teaching or other day-time occupations, who are unable to read for a degree.

It has, we believe, sometimes been held that with the growth of the new Universities and Colleges, the University Extension movement would be superseded. This is in our opinion a quite mistaken view. The needs of adult education tend constantly to outstrip the means of satisfying them, and the University Extension system has still an important part to play, and not least in the study of English literature. In the Education Act of 1918, Section 3 (2), it is laid down that Local Education Authorities in submitting "schemes for the progressive organisation of a system of continuation

schools, shall have regard to the desirability of including therein arrangements for co-operation with universities in the provision of lectures and classes for scholars to whom instruction by such means is suitable." Thus new opportunities are offered to the movement and this will become increasingly important when the clauses of the Act relating to the attendance of young persons between 16 and 18 years of age become operative. In his address to the British Association at Cardiff on 27th August, 1920, the President of the Board of Education paid a tribute to this "popular and effective scheme," and expressed the hope that the Universities would not relax their efforts to spread its influence.

If, however, the University Extension system is to do all that in it lies for the promotion of enlightened interest in our literature greater fixity of tenure must be secured for experienced lecturers. Here the Colleges might help by awarding Fellowships for University Extension or Tutorial Class work in English. We believe that of the few Fellowships hitherto given for such work, none has hitherto been assigned to a lecturer on literature. And if, as we hope, the Pension scheme for teachers is soon extended to University Professors and lecturers, those engaged in the extra-mural academic work should certainly be included.

LITERATURE IN WORKERS' EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATION CLASSES.*

249. Despite the evidence we have received as to the hostility of the working-classes to literature, it is interesting to notice that the number of tutorial and other W.E.A. classes taking literary subjects grows year by year.

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* An account of the origin, history and character of these classes will be found in the Report of the Adult Education Committee, pp. 29–33, 62–68, 214–217.

The following table will exemplify this growth :—

Year.	1914–15.	1915–16.	1916–17.	1917–18.	1918–19.	1919–20.	1920–21.
Total number of tutorial classes -	154	121	99	121	152	229	287
Number of tutorial classes taking Literature - -	15	17	10	15	27	44	59

The growth, it will be noted, is not only actual but relative; in 1914–15 one out of every 10 classes took literature; in the present year more than one out of every five are taking it. At the same time it must be remembered that this increase is partly accounted for by the advent of a growing number of teachers and women into the movement during recent years. We welcome the spread of an interest in literature in any section of the community, more especially among teachers, but we wish we could feel assured that it was as great among the artisan class as elsewhere.

250. All our witnesses emphasised the point that this interest could only spread in proportion as the artisan student was made to realise the connection between literature and life. "The tendency of some literature teachers to examine literary forms seems to establish the erroneous view that literature is divorced from life, that it is merely a pleasant but rather futile exercise in the art of expression. It matters little to the worker whether a poem is a lyric or an epic, whether it is in trochees or iambics. He wants to know what it means, how it interprets life, the source and secret of its inspiration. It is obvious that before the teacher can go far he must know each student, and build his syllabus upon that foundation. The teaching of literature is not a matter of barter. The tutor should not insist upon

taking books of his own choice—however excellent, nor pass to the class his own preconceived notions. His object should be so to present the matter that the enthusiasm of the students kindles, and with heightened imagination they form opinion for themselves—opinions that shall alter with increased knowledge." Another witness, who was especially insistent upon the difficulty of gaining working-class interest in literature, suggested that perhaps the easiest route was one that started with economics and then went on to the study of social philosophy, which would introduce the students to "the work of writers who have endeavoured to interpret the life of their time, such as Carlyle, Ruskin, Morris and the modern school of social dramatists and writers. The step from work of this type," he concludes, "to the study of literature is but a small one."

251. In this connection we should like to repeat and emphasise a paragraph in the Report of the Committee on Adult Education, since it expresses views which we heartily endorse, having arrived at them independently on the evidence before us. The Committee write :—

"The primary aim of education in literature, so far as adult students are concerned, should not be the acquisition of information but the cultivation of imagination. The test of its success is not that students should be able to talk fluently, or even intelligently, about literary history, but that they should have been penetrated by the power of some great writer, should have made something of him at least a part of themselves, and should have acquired insensibly an inner standard of excellence. The indispensable qualification of the teacher of literature, therefore, is not learning, but passion and a power to communicate it. The method ought not simply, we think, to be that of the lecture, even of the lecture accompanied by question and answer. The teacher must possess enough of the actor's gift to be able to read aloud impressively. The student must read and recite and act; for poetry, no more than music,

can be appreciated merely by the eye. Mere knowledge of literary history profits little. What is desired is the wide diffusion of taste, of critical faculty and even of creative power, such as have produced popular poetry in the past, and find expression in the literary festivals of Wales to-day.

"Obviously such results do not come by observation. It should be equally obvious that it is worth while to turn, at least, in the right direction. It is only to a small extent a problem of organising the supply of teaching. It is true that classes in literature do valuable work, provided that their members do not merely listen to a lecture but really steep themselves in the authors who are chosen for study, and that the teacher has unusual gifts of inspiration. But to regard education in literature primarily from the standpoint of class-work is to interpret it too narrowly. The class should be the starting point for activity, individual and collective, on the part of the students. In some classes such as those conducted in Yorkshire by Professor Moorman and Mr. Grubb, it is the practice for the students to give dramatic performances as a conclusion to the session's work, and such experiments should become a regular feature of classes in literature. Attention should be given to the possibilities of dialect literature, not as a philological curiosity, but because dialect, where it still lives, is the natural speech of emotion, and therefore of poetry and drama. Students should be encouraged to write, and to write in their local language and with the material offered by the scenes and life which are familiar to them. If they are to love literature, and not merely to talk cleverly about it, they must feel that it is a thing not artificial, but homely and made out of the same stuff as the tragedy and comedy of their own surroundings. The provincial culture of England, Wales and Scotland, whether it be rural or industrial, is as nourishing a food for poetry as the Irish peasant life portrayed by Synge. If one function of literary education among adults, as we conceive it, is to

open for the individual windows into a wider world, another and not less important is to aid the expression of that popular culture."

252. If these views be correct, as we believe them to be, the English Departments at our provincial Universities have a great opportunity laid at their feet. A beginning has been made in most of them since few members of their staffs are without experience of W.E.A. work of some kind. But the opportunity can only, in our judgment, be fully exploited under certain conditions. First, the problem of the right approach to literature with this type of student requires careful consideration and gives scope for a good deal of experiment. Undoubtedly the nearest way with a large number is the avenue of social interests. A preliminary course on modern Industrial History or Social Philosophy, with ample illustrations from the pages of Carlyle, Ruskin, William Morris and Matthew Arnold, will often make a fruitful beginning. Another avenue, for those who have a liking for literature but whose tastes are crude and unformed, is to start with books they know and gradually lead them on to the consideration of more worthy material. In any case, the tutor must first of all explore the minds of his students, their tastes and prejudices, and build on these. To begin by throwing the classics of English literature at their heads is generally to court failure. In the second place, the method of treatment is of great importance. The stock-in-trade of the "academic" teacher, sources, influences, movements and biographical details, should be relegated to the background. Even questions of literary form are best left till near the end of the course when the students' minds will be perhaps ripe to entertain them. The vital thing is to make it obvious from the outset that literature is alive, that it is the sublimation of human thought, passion, feeling, that it is concerned with issues which are of universal interest, that in short it is flesh and blood and not stucco ornamentation. To accomplish this, the teacher must himself be full of

life and passion, and must be able to convince his students of this by so rendering poetry that it may be—

"Felt in the blood and felt along the heart."

Thirdly, the aim of such teaching should not be knowledge or even "appreciation," but creation. The students are not to be passive recipients, but active participators; they must be fired to do things, to write poems and perhaps plays or at the very least to act the plays of others. We believe that far more might be done in this direction than has yet been attempted. The work of Professor Moorman in Yorkshire, lamentably cut short by a tragic and untimely death, was full of promise for the future. His success was due chiefly of course to the magic of his personality, but also to three salient features of his work: (i) his refusal from the start of a class to allow passengers on the boat; a "log-book" was instituted and even the shyest member was obliged to take his turn in recording the experiences of the previous meeting, and the record not infrequently took verse form; (ii) his active interest in the local dialect, an interest which gave him the entry to the hearts of all sorts and conditions of men; (iii) his practice of crowning the work of a year in class with the performance of a play, in which the members took part. In all this he worked towards the realisation of his dream of a folk-poetry and a folk-drama, of a great art rising spontaneously from the life of the community. But, as he wrote, "before a modern folk-poetry can arise there must be a recognition of the *spiritual* oneness of the folk and the creation of a folk-imagination of which folk-poetry is the direct and concrete expression in the symbolic language of art." The belief which inspires every paragraph of the present Report is that this much-desired spiritual unity in the nation and the equally necessary uplift in the whole level of the popular imagination can only come through a general acknowledgment of the paramount place which the native speech and literature should occupy in our schools and in the common life of our people.

CHAPTER IX.

SOME PARTICULAR ASPECTS OF THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH.

253. We have now, as our terms of reference required of us, considered the position of English in Educational Institutions of all types. There remain, however, certain topics, on some of which we have already touched, but which we have not been able to deal with comprehensively in the preceding chapters. To these we propose to devote the remainder of our Report.

I.—THE PROBLEM OF GRAMMAR.

254. We have already shown in our Historical Retrospect* that a paramount place was given to grammar in the primary schools of the 19th century, and that, when it ceased to be a compulsory subject in 1890, it rapidly "disappeared from all but a few schools, to the joy of children and teacher." Strong representations were made to us that this reaction against grammar had proceeded too far, representations not so much from teachers of language as from those whose enthusiasm for literature was unquestionable. For example, Mr. J. E. Barton, after telling us that "taste can only be developed by means which are positive and creative," and that "so far as we can truly speak of 'teaching' English literature at all, it must be taught by the same process which has made it," went on as follows: "Immense harm has been done by the well-meant discouragement of formal grammar in the elementary schools. Even clever scholarship boys are at 12 quite at sea on simple principles of sentence structure which are vital to all linguistic study. Grammar can *not* be satisfactorily 'picked up' in the course of learning Latin or French. Grammar drill, of the simpler kind, with analysis, should be universal,

* Chapter II., §§ 50, 51.

and kept in its proper place without reference to the other and higher side of English teaching. Grammar teaching and literature teaching are distinct processes. The official discouragement of formal grammar has sacrificed absolute accuracy in the old grammatical sense, without securing in return any real knowledge of literature." Over against this testimony may be set that of Dr. P. B. Ballard, who, speaking as an educational psychologist, declared: "It is a demonstrable fact that Grammar is the most unpopular subject in the curriculum of the primary school, and is not much liked in the secondary school. I have convinced myself by an extensive inquiry that in the elementary school formal grammar (*a*) fails to provide a general mental training, (*b*) does not enable the teachers to eradicate solecisms, (*c*) does not aid in composition, and (*d*) takes up time which could much more profitably be devoted to the study of literature. During the last 15 years English composition, both written and oral, has steadily improved in the elementary school, and this improvement has taken place concomitantly with a declining attention to grammar and an increasing attention to literature." *

255. The testimony of these two witnesses is the more important inasmuch as we believe it to be typical. At first sight the conflict of opinion appears to be absolute. It is true that, when pressed, Dr. Ballard stated that his objections "applied only to premature grammar, not to grammar taught after the age of 14, when the pupil's interest in abstract thought had begun to manifest itself and his logical powers were fairly mature." But this does not help matters very much. Mr. Barton, speaking for the secondary schools, wished the work to be done by the elementary schoolmaster; Dr. Ballard, speaking for the elementary schools, would leave the task to the secondary school. In other words, neither party likes the job, and each is anxious to shift

* Dr. Ballard has since developed this thesis in a book entitled *Teaching the Mother Tongue.*

the responsibility for it on to the shoulders of the other. Moreover, on the topic of the right age at which to begin grammar-teaching we received the most conflicting evidence imaginable. Dr. Ballard's dictum that grammar is "premature" in the elementary school makes the age of 14 the downward limit. Other witnesses delivered themselves as follows: "Formal grammar should not be begun until the age of 11 or 12"; "Formal grammar lessons should be postponed until the age of 10 or 11"; "Children of 8 or 9 can learn the elements of grammar"; while at least one witness gave us to understand that it was almost impossible to begin grammar too early. Equally varied was the evidence as to whether the teaching of grammar should be direct or indirect, that is to say, whether it should consist of set lessons or of such occasional treatment as arises in connection with composition work. Finally the whole matter was complicated by the requirements of the teachers of foreign languages. Ought the English teacher to prepare the ground for his colleagues who take Latin, French, Greek, and German? Is grammar necessary for those who will not be learning any language but their own? As we shall see presently, these questions are vital, but upon them the most diverse opinions prevailed.

When a subject is thus hotly debated, and when it is difficult to discover a general consensus of opinion among practitioners upon any aspect of the matter, it is legitimate to suspect that the problem has hitherto not been sufficiently analysed or envisaged, and that the confusion of tongues arises from confusion of thought. Under such circumstances, we believe that the most useful thing we can do in this Report is to make some attempt to set the problem in its proper proportions.

256. To return to the issue between Mr. Barton and Dr. Ballard. Is it so absolute as it seems at first glance? Dr. Ballard told us that grammar does not provide a general mental training, or enable teachers to eradicate solecisms, or afford any help in composition work, and

he argued therefrom that grammar-teaching is futile, or at the least wholly premature, in the elementary school. On the other hand, Mr. Barton's complaint was that by neglecting grammar the elementary school is throwing aside an instrument which is "vital to all *linguistic study*." The witnesses were using the word "grammar" in two different senses; Dr. Ballard was attacking the old conception of grammar, as a body of rules which were supposed to be binding upon all who would speak or write "correctly"—in short, grammar as legislation; Mr. Barton was asking the elementary school to lay the foundations of grammar, in the true sense, that is a body of facts about language in general and English in particular—in short, grammar as a science. This divergence in meaning takes us at once to the heart of the problem. For why do we learn or teach grammar? The answer may be given in the words of one of our greatest living authorities on language, Professor Wyld, who writes as follows in his school text-book on grammar:*—"It is quite a mistaken idea to suppose that English Grammars are written to teach English people how to speak their own language. Men who write grammars do not suppose that they can set up a model of English speech, however much they may wish to do so. Hardly anyone, as a matter of fact, alters his way of speaking because a Grammar tells him that his way is wrong, or that another way is right. This would indeed be putting the cart before the horse. A Grammar book does *not* attempt to teach people how they *ought* to speak, but, on the contrary, unless it is a very bad or a very old work, it merely states how, as a matter of fact, certain people *do* speak at the time at which it is written. . . . The study of English Grammar is really a preparation for the careful and intelligent study of language. We, as English people, can best approach the question of what is called the structure of the language, through English. . . . There are certain facts which are true of all

* Elementary Lessons in English Grammar, pp. 11, 12.

languages. We can readily observe them in our own language and understand the reason of them when it is explained to us. If we have a clear notion of these things in English, we shall not be puzzled when we come across similar occurrences in Latin, or Greek, or French, or German." In these temperate sentences the issue between Messrs. Ballard and Barton is resolved. If grammar is the necessary introduction to all linguistic study, then grammar must be taught to all who are to make a study of language, more particularly those who will learn the language of the Classics or of foreign countries. If, on the other hand, a knowledge of grammar does little or nothing to improve the speaking or writing of the mother tongue, then it ceases to be essential for children who do not require any linguistic study. For practical purposes, all that will be required is the creation of a habit of correct speech, and this can be effected through the reading of literature and the writing of composition.

257. Grammar of some kind, then, should be taught in either the elementary or the secondary school, or in both. But what of its "unpopularity," the "joy of the teacher and children" when it disappeared in 1890, and the anxiety of the elementary and secondary schoolmaster to see the other man undertaking the task of teaching it? An unpopular subject is generally a subject which is badly taught, and bad teaching is almost invariably the product of misunderstanding and lack of interest. Grammar is certainly badly taught as a rule. Indeed, in the opinion of some best acquainted with the schools it is rare to hear a lesson in grammar in which the teacher does not make statements about the structure of the language which are, to say the least of it, open to question. Whence comes this lack of interest and this inaccuracy? A partial answer is to be found in the fact that grammar is usually taught for the wrong reasons, and reasons which a growing number of teachers are coming to see are wrong. In other words, grammar is still almost universally regarded as a body of rules

governing correct speech. When Professor Wyld says, "Men who write grammars do not suppose they can set up a model of English speech," his leniency towards those who year by year flood the market with school text-books on grammar is generous to a fault With the exception of his own admirable little treatise, there are very few class books on the subject which do not explicitly or implicitly "lay down the law." And if the text-books take this line, the teachers *a fortiori* do the same. Yet, as we say, an increasing number of them are ceasing to believe that grammar exercises a beneficial influence upon the speech or written composition of their pupils. And such sceptics continue to teach it because they are expected so to do by an old-fashioned headmaster, by a visiting inspector with an enthusiasm for "mental discipline," or by a local authority which has neglected to revise its syllabuses, or again simply because it is an examination subject. But teaching without faith is dead. Undoubtedly, therefore, an abatement of the traditional claims of grammar, a recognition that its position in the curriculum is justified because it is the essential groundwork of all linguistic study, and for no other reason, would go some way towards rehabilitating its prestige in the schools.

258. But this by itself would not be enough to make it popular or even interesting. Not only do the aims of grammar teaching need restating, but its methods need radical reform. Nearly all text-books on grammar are written as if English were a dead language. Their rules, examples and exceptions are expressed in the form of our conventional spellings rather than of the spoken words or syllables which those spellings represent, often very inadequately. Few school grammarians appear to realise that a living language is composed of sounds, not of letters; for example, to state the rule for the plural inflexion of English nouns in terms of spelling without the use of phonetic symbols is quite misleading.*

* *See* § 264 (i).

Few again appreciate the fact that the structure of English—and grammar is a description of structure, nothing more—is fundamentally different from that of a highly inflexional language like Latin. The trouble is, in short, that most English grammar-books are the illegitimate offspring of Latin grammar-books.

259. Before the 19th century the only grammar normally found in school was a Latin one. But there dawned a day when the schoolmaster, steeped in the Renaissance tradition, was suddenly confronted by the serried ranks of children for whom a classical education was an impossibility. How was he to get them to speak and to write correctly? He had taught Latin prose and verse by means of Latin grammar; and rightly so, for Latin was a foreign language, and withal a dead language, so that the laws of its structure, generalisations drawn from the practice of the best Latin authors who had survived in the form of books, were both scientific and legislative; they taught one how the Romans wrote in the Augustan age and how to imitate them with propriety. English, our schoolmaster concluded, must be taught in the same way:* what other way was there? Accordingly "English grammar" came to be (i) formulated as a series of doctrines on correct speech, and (ii) modelled as closely as possible on the pattern of the old Latin grammars. After all English was a *pis aller*, a cheap substitute for the glories of the Classics to which only the sons of the well-to-do could aspire. Compared with Latin, it was a poor thing; it had lost most of its cases, it had no genders, and its lack of inflexions was deplorable Still, with a little ingenuity, a grammar could be made out of it which might serve as a colourable imitation of that nobler accidence and syntax, nobler because so much richer in forms, which governed the

* To avoid misunderstanding, it should be remarked that text-books on English Grammar were being written as early as the sixteenth century on the old classical lines. English Grammar, however, did not become a widely recognised school subject before the nineteenth century.

speech of Virgil and Lucretius, of Cicero and Julius Cæsar. What followed from all this may best be described in the indignant words of J. W. Hales, written as long ago as 1868: "The vulgar grammar-maker, dazzled by the glory of the ruling language, knew no better than to transfer to English the schemes which belonged to Latin.

'Jungebat mortua vivis.'

He never dreamt that the language for which he was practising his rude grammatical midwifery might have a character of its own, might require a scheme of its own. He knew, or he thought he knew, what the grammar of any language ought to be, and he went about his work accordingly. What chance had our poor mother-tongue in the clutch of this Procrustes? The Theseus of linguistic science, the deliverer, was not yet born. So the poor language got miserably tortured, and dislocated, and mangled. Who could wonder if it failed to thrive under such treatment? if it grew haggard and deformed? All the passers-by were on the side of Procrustes; and, when the victim shrieked at some particularly cruel stretch of its limbs, they called it disorderly, reprobate, vicious. . . . It became a proverb of refractoriness. It was anathematised as utterly lawless and hopeless. Its guardians did not understand its character; they judged it by their own narrow standard; they could not conceive that there were more things in heaven and earth than were dreamt of in their philosophy; they consigned this hapless nonconformist to profound neglect. It was mad, and there was no method in its madness, they said. They took no pains to investigate its hallucinations; these did not deserve so much consideration."*

260. Matters have improved since Hales wrote; but in general his strictures upon "the vulgar grammar-makers" still hold good. For though linguistic science has made enormous strides meanwhile, it has only within

* *The Teaching of English* (*Essays on a Liberal Education*, ed. by Dean Farrar).

quite recent years brought any hope of the deliverance for the English language which he expected. The idea that a language was admirable in proportion to its richness in forms, and more particularly in inflexions, was strengthened by the fact that modern comparative philology took its rise in a country which still spoke a highly inflexional tongue, namely, Germany,* by the study of Gothic and other primitive Teutonic languages, and by the discovery of the kinship of the Indo-Germanic group. It was assumed that the inflexional system was the crowning development in the history of language, and that a speech which had lost its inflexions was in a state of decay. Thus August Schleicher, the famous German philologist of the 'sixties, was wont to set the English *had* side by side with its portentous Gothic ancestor *habaidêdeima* and to sigh over the sad fate which had overtaken so splendid an original, ignoring the fact that the clumsy Gothic giant could not perform a tithe of the work which its useful and active little descendant to-day accomplishes. This false philosophy of linguistics, in turn, led to a concentration by scholars upon Old and Middle English, as being rich in forms, rather than upon their "degenerate" offspring, Modern English. Thus not only was the speech of Shakespeare, Milton, Shelley and Wordsworth despised by the philologist, but the laws of its structure were completely misunderstood, so that scholars have only within our own time begun to pay proper attention to them. The banner of revolt against this German tyranny was first raised in Denmark, a country whose speech is, from the old standpoint, almost as degraded as our own. Professor Jespersen, Rector of the University of Copenhagen and one of the greatest authorities on comparative philology in Europe,

* The comparison between the sturdy integrity of the German tongue and the decadent Teutonic speech of modern England was an important element in the "German legend" which directly led to the Great War of 1914. Here, as elsewhere, the theories of philologists have played a larger part in modern history than the historians have yet recognised.

has made a special study of modern English and has shown, in his *Progress in Language* (1894), that so far from our language being decadent or degraded through its loss of inflexions, that loss has made it the most serviceable, labour-saving and practical instrument of thought, with the possible exception of Chinese, yet devised by man. To make the point clear it will be well to quote a few passages from his book, which is too little known in this country.

261. " It is a well-known law in psychology that the power of grasping abstract notions is of comparatively late growth in the individual as well as the race. The development in language of grammatical forms of a more abstract character constitutes a great advance upon the earlier state when there was little beyond concrete terms. The notion that was formerly expressed by one inseparable word is now often expressed by means of a group of pronouns, auxiliary verbs, prepositions, and other little words, each with a comparatively abstract signification. It is one of the consequences of this change that it has become considerably easier to express certain minute shades of thought by laying extra stress on some particular element in the speech-group. The Latin *cantaveram* amalgamates three ideas into one indissoluble whole; but in the English *I had sung* the elements are analysed, so that you can at will accentuate the personal element, the time element, or the action" (page 24).

" The doing away with the old case distinctions in English has facilitated many extremely convenient idioms unknown in the older synthetic languages, such as: ' The girl was given a book,' ' The lad was highly spoken of,' ' I love, and am loved by, my wife.' . . . Another advantage is derived from the giving up of the distinctive forms of the singular and plural in adjectives and adjectival pronouns, as is seen from the comparison of the English ' *my* wife and children ' with the French ' *ma* femme et *mes* enfants,' or of ' the *local* press and committees ' with ' *la* presse *locale* et *les* comités locaux.' Try to translate

exactly into French and Latin such a sentence as 'What are the present state and wants of mankind?' (pages 31–2)

"If we compare a group of Latin words such as *opera virorum omnium bonorum veterum* with a corresponding group in a few other languages of a less inflexional type; Old English, *ealra godra ealdra manna weorc*; Danish, *alle gode gamle mænds væker*; Modern English, *all good old men's works*, we perceive by analysing the ideas expressed by the several words that the Romans said really: 'work,' plural, nominative or accusative + 'man,' plural, masculine, genitive + 'all,' plural, genitive + 'old,' plural, masculine, genitive. Leaving *opera* out of consideration, we find that 'plural number' is expressed four times, 'genitive case' also four times, and 'masculine gender' twice; in Old English the signs of number and case are found four times each, while there is no indication of gender; in Danish the plural number is marked four times and the case once. And finally, in Modern English, we find each idea expressed only once; and as nothing is lost in clearness, this method, as being the easiest and shortest, must be considered the best (pages 35–6).

"The evolution of language shows a progressive tendency from inseparable irregular conglomerations to freely and regularly combinable short elements" (page 127). In this connection it may be objected that *dixi*, for example, is more compact than *I have spoken* or *I have said*; to which Professor Jespersen replies by showing that while in a selected and isolated phrase like this the analytical language may appear to be at a disadvantage, there is nevertheless an immense actual saving of breath (or type) when the comparison is made over a wide field. Thus the Gospel of St. Matthew contains approximately the following number of syllables in the following languages: Greek, 39,000; German, 36,000; Swedish, 35,000; Danish, 32,000; English, 29,000; Chinese, 17,000. (Page 120.)

The advantages which English, the most analytical language in modern Europe, possesses over more syntac-

tical languages ancient and modern are thus summarised by Professor Jespersen :—

> (i) " Its forms are generally shorter;
> (ii) There are not so many of them to burden the memory;
> (iii) Their formation and use present fewer irregularities;
> (iv) Their more abstract character assists materially in facilitating expression, and makes it possible to do away with the repetitions of languages which demand ' concord ' " (Page 39).

262. The foregoing extracts are merely illustrative; the general trend of Professor Jespersen's argument can only be fully appreciated by reading the book as a whole. The argument, however, is irresistible and brings the history of language into line with other modern conceptions of human development. And its practical application to the question of the teaching of English grammar is immediate. It shows us not only that Greek, Latin and German are less subtle, less supple, less serviceable, and therefore—dare we say it?—less civilised than modern English, but also that the structure, and therefore the grammar, of our living tongue is quite different from that of synthetic languages, dead or alive. What this structure is we are only now beginning to find out. It is possible that future text-books on English grammar will wear an air very strange to those brought up on " cases," " declensions," conjugations," &c., that we shall hear of new parts of speech and much of " word-order," " token words " and the like. But a great deal still remains to be done first. The only secure basis for modern English grammar is a scientific history of the language from the days of Chaucer to our own, a matter which is still very much in dispute, while Professor Wyld is one of the very few scholars in this country who have yet attempted to work it out in the light of recent research.

263. Is it then impossible at the present juncture to teach English grammar in the schools for the simple reason

that no one knows exactly what it is? If by "English Grammar" be meant a *complete* description of the structure of the language with special attention to its *differences* from other languages, it is certainly far too early to attempt to teach it. Moreover, even if the linguists had finished their work and formulated for us all the rules of modern English speech, it is doubtful whether the study of them should be undertaken before the student reaches the higher forms of the secondary school, and only then perhaps when he is proposing later to make English philology one of his subjects at the University. Further, just because English grammar deals with a language so different from the foreign languages, ancient and modern, which the student will have to learn, it is eminently unsuitable as an introduction to linguistic study. Yet, as we have seen, it is highly desirable that children should obtain some kind of general introduction to linguistic study, and that this introduction should be given them through the medium of their own speech. What is to be done?

264. We are happily free from most of the cumbersome inflexions which hampered the utterances of our ancestors and which still hamper that of our old-fashioned cousins, the Germans. We modulate the variety of our thought not by changing the sound of the words we use, but by altering their order or by employing one or more of those little separable prefixes, in which our speech is so rich, such as pronouns, prepositions and auxiliary verbs. Nevertheless, while our language is built on a newer and better plan than those of others, *the structure of our thought* remains the same. The sentences we use still contain subject and predicate; the words we utter can still for the most part be classified under the various headings in the time-honoured list of "parts of speech." In a word, there is a grammar which can be taught through the medium of the English language. But this grammar is not "English" grammar, it is pure grammar; it is concerned with the essential modes of thought of all

peoples, whether they speak the inflexionless language of the Chinese or a primitive tongue like Bantu in which inflexions are as numerous and as burdensome as the grasshopper. And because it is pure grammar, because it deals with laws which are of universal application, because it is independent of grammatical forms, this kind of grammar is the true introduction to linguistic study, whatever foreign language may be taken up later. Indeed, even elementary school children, for the majority of whom the chances of learning a foreign language are remote, would assuredly benefit from some consideration of the fundamental laws which govern the expression of their thought, We are of opinion, therefore, that the case for teaching pure grammar, a grammar of function not of form, is an exceedingly strong one. But if it be taught, it must be taught as pure grammar and nothing else. In this connection, the following considerations are relevant :—(i) the teaching must be closely allied with phonetics, since the first fact to be learnt about language is that it is composed of sounds, and since there are some grammatical notions which it is impossible to convey without the use of phonetic symbols; (ii) the terminology employed should be that common to the grammars of all languages, *i.e.*, that recommended in the report of the Joint Committee on Grammatical Terminology; (iii) no attempt should be made to teach "English" grammar as distinct from pure grammar; in other words, the examples, which of course will be taken from English, should be carefully chosen so as to illustrate universal functions and not those peculiar to our own speech; (iv) still less should the forms and functions peculiar to the synthetic languages be introduced at this stage, since this is likely to give the student erroneous ideas concerning the structure of his own language.

Some attempts have been made of recent years to provide the schools with grammar text-books on the lines we advocate here. But we are not satisfied that

any have quite succeeded in the task, or indeed that so elaborate an instrument as a text-book is required for so simple a matter. One of the curses of grammar in the past has been over-elaboration. A few lessons, followed by appropriate exercises in analysis and synthesis, should be enough to explain what language is and to show the young people how to break up a sentence into its component parts; and once the tools have been mastered, all that is necessary is to keep them bright by use. The over-elaboration has been partly due in the past to the setting aside of a special section on the time-table for grammar. In our view it is unnecessary to do this, since the topic is, or should be, too limited in scope, which does not mean that it is unimportant.

265. To sum up:—

i. The sole justification for teaching grammar in school is that it forms the necessary introduction to the study of language, seeing that it is not a body of doctrine upon correct speech but a scientific description of the facts of language.

ii. Grammar has been badly taught in the past because (*a*) its nature has been misunderstood, (*b*) the formulation of its rules has followed the old Latin grammar-books far too closely.

iii. Since modern English has hitherto received scant attention from philologists, and the laws of its structure have not as yet been fully worked out, English grammar, as distinct from pure grammar, is, when entered upon in the class-room, a territory full of pitfalls.

iv. Even if modern English grammar had been fully formulated, it would not serve usefully as an introduction to the study of language, inasmuch as the English language holds a position almost unique among languages in the western world.

v. The proper grammar to study in school is not English grammar, but pure or functional grammar, including the elements of phonetics, analysis and a little parsing. This should be taught to all who are to learn

foreign languages, while there seems no reason why it should not be introduced in the higher classes of the elementary school, provided those who teach it understand exactly what it is they are dealing with and above all keep it simple.

vi. For the teaching of correct speech in school we should rely, first of all, on correction of mistakes when they arise; secondly, on the great power of imitation; and thirdly, at a later stage, though not in the earliest stage, on the teaching of the general rules to which our standard speech conforms.

266. In conclusion we desire to quote from the Board of Education's circular on *The Teaching of English in Secondary Schools* (1910), which, as we are encouraged to find, adopts a standpoint on the question of grammar very closely approximating to our own :—

"The parts of speech, with their function in the sentence, and the simple rules of concord will either be known by pupils before they enter the Secondary School or will be taught there as preparatory to the regular school course in English. It should be borne in mind that the simplicity of the rules of concord in English is a reason for insisting on their accurate observance by the pupils.

"There is no such thing as English Grammar in the sense which used to be attached to the term. Grammar is the structure of the language reduced to theoretic system, but no system based on the phenomena of any living language can be final. English is not a language the growth of which is ended and the usages of which can therefore be collected and expressed in settled formulæ, but is a living organism in process of constant change. In the past the formal teaching of English Grammar was based on Latin Grammar. It is now recognised that this was a mistake founded on a whole set of misconceptions. The rules governing the use of a highly inflected language like Latin are almost wholly inapplicable to English. Nor is English a language of which the pupils

are entirely ignorant before they begin to learn it at school, and which accordingly they cannot begin to decipher without the help of grammatical rules. . . .

"Modern English is to all intents and purposes an uninflected language. The few inflexions which survive may call for incidental notice in the course of reading or composition, and may be illustrated by analogies from any inflected foreign language which is being learnt by the class."

II.—ENGLISH AND EXAMINATIONS.

(*a*) Examinations in the Use of English.

267. In the course of this Report we have referred in several places to Examinations in English. We have made certain recommendations which partly indicate our attitude towards them. But the relation of English to the examination system is so important a matter that some further consideration of it, at least from the point of view of school teaching, seems incumbent upon us.

No one will dispute the ascendancy of the examination system in education to-day. We accept it as a fact, confronting the teacher of English, as of any other subject. It is there, and if English is to receive its due share of recognition English must make terms with it. The nature of those terms is the question before us.

The examination system operates in two ways. It provides a test, and also a stimulus. Upon a large part of the teaching of English it can exercise these two functions with highly beneficial effect. We have drawn a distinction between two aspects of "English": the power of communication in English, and the appreciation of literature as an art. The first of these is eminently susceptible of being tested, and consequently of being encouraged, by examinations. We are therefore anxious that the examination system should be applied to it as widely as possible.

268. Sir Stanley Leathes informed us that the Civil Service Commissioners " hold very strongly that effective teaching and practice in the use and comprehension of English is a subject literally of first importance in all education at whatever stage. In the best candidates, in their opinion, fair results are actually obtained . . . but among weaker candidates it is clear that instruction, for one reason or another, is very ineffective. They are certain that it should be possible to improve it." He submitted specimens of papers set to candidates for the various classes of Civil Service appointments, especially for the purpose of testing their ability to use and to understand English. Ingenious invention was required, he said, in devising suitable tests, and the Commissioners had tried a number of experiments, but did not suggest that they had explored all the possibilities. In the examination for Junior appointments, in which the candidates were between 18 and 19½ years of age, English was tested by an essay, a précis and a general paper. In the opinion of the Commissioners, précis writing was an excellent test both of competence in the use and comprehension of English and also of business-like ability. But it was possible that candidates might be tempted to spend too much time under preparation and practice in writing précis, and to obviate this it was desirable, where feasible, that other tests should also be employed. In the general paper the mode of expression, order, arrangement, lucidity, phrasing, were valued as well as the knowledge or argument put forward by the candidate.

269. The examination for Class I appointments is to be held for the first time under the new scheme in 1921. This scheme is consequent upon the Report, dated 20th June 1917, of the Committee appointed by the Lords of the Treasury to consider and report upon the scheme of examination for Class I of the Civil Service. Candidates for this examination are between 22 and 24, and the above-mentioned Committee regard it as designed to test the results of University Education in general

"We consider," they observe, "that all well-educated young men should be able to use the English language skilfully and accurately, and to grasp its meaning readily and correctly." Accordingly, Sir Stanley Leathes informs us, "in the new Class I examination English will be tested (1) by an essay, (2) by a paper called "English, Other Tests," (3) by a general paper of scientific questions, (4) by a similar paper on political and social questions, and (5) by translation papers from one foreign language. The last three of these tests will serve other purposes besides the testing of English, but the first two will be mainly, if not wholly, tests in the use and comprehension of English."

It appears to us highly satisfactory that in such an examination as this, for selected students at the graduate stage, the candidates' command of English should not only not be taken for granted, but should be so comprehensively tested, and we have no doubt that the practice now to be followed in this examination will react advantageously on others.

270. The Elementary Schools are no longer, as formerly, outside the scope of the examination system. Many children between the ages of 10 and 12 are now examined by Local Education Authorities for scholarships to Secondary Schools, or for admission to Central Schools, and the number so examined appears likely to increase considerably in view of the recommendation by the Departmental Committee on Scholarships and Free Places that "all boys and girls in elementary schools who have reached the age of 11 should be examined for scholarship purposes, with the exception of those who, at the age of 11, have failed to reach a place in the school corresponding to that reached by their contemporaries." This is bound to have an important influence on the teaching, and especially on the work in English, the subject which should be most taken into account. It will be clear from what we have said elsewhere that the chief thing to be looked for at this early stage is power of communication in English.

Opportunity should be given for some continuous writing of a simple kind—a letter, a description, a narrative, the re-telling of a story, or a "short essay" on an imaginative subject, such for instance as one we select from various papers submitted to us:—"Your toys are supposed to come to life at midnight. Describe what you think will happen then." Vocabulary, too, should be tested, and capacity for taking in the meaning of a passage read or heard and reproducing the sense of it. On the other hand, it would be very detrimental to the teaching if the examination caused it to be inferred that English should consist at this stage chiefly of parsing and analysis and the learning of spelling. Considerable danger indeed attends a written examination in English of these young children. Their speech and reading aloud ought always to be tested. It should be remembered that their teaching should be largely oral, and that it is essential that the examination should do nothing to discourage this.

271. The examinations which most affect the Secondary Schools are the First and Second Schools Examinations, and examinations for University Scholarships. From August 1, 1917, the Board of Education undertook the functions and responsibilities of a Co-ordinating Authority for Secondary School Examinations, with the assistance of a body called "The Secondary School Examinations Council." Eight external examinations have now been approved by the Board as First Examinations,* and "Investigators" appointed by the Council inquired into the methods and standards of award in the examinations held in July 1918. They reported in April 1919. With regard to the use of English they say "All the Examina-

* The School Certificate Examination of the Oxford and Cambridge Schools Examination Board. The Senior Local Examination of the University of Oxford. The Senior Local Examination of the University of Cambridge. The First School Certificate Examination of the University of Durham. The General School Examination of the University of London. The School Certificate Examination of the Joint Matriculation Board. The School Certificate Examination of the University of Bristol. The Senior Certificate Examination of the Central Welsh Board

tions reviewed, with one exception, combine an Essay with some further examination in English Composition, which in most cases includes Précis, in some cases Reproduction of a Narrative read aloud, and in some cases the answering of questions on the use of words or on sentence-construction." Speaking of Grammar and Composition, they say: "much skill has been devoted in recent years to the finding of suitable questions and to varying them in character." They carefully considered the question whether an English Essay should be compulsory for all candidates, and the first part of their report concludes with the words: "it does not seem desirable to make a pass in an Essay obligatory. The Investigators favour the policy of determining a Candidate's success in English by his achievement in the English papers (*i.e*, papers in Composition and Literature) as a whole. Finally, they are of opinion that (in the interest of the language and of lucidity of expression) a reasonable standard of English should be required in all Subjects of the Examination. They would urge that some statement to this effect should appear in all Examination Syllabuses and be brought to the notice of their Examiners by Examination Authorities."

The existing regulations for the approved first examinations agree in requiring candidates to pass in five subjects taken from three groups, Group I, containing the "English" subjects, viz., Religious Knowledge, English, History and Geography; Group II, Foreign Languages; Group III, Mathematics and Science But the examinations differ materially from each other in the extent to which English is required. English may or may not be compulsory, and the English Syllabus may include an essay, or a language paper, or both, and may or may not require the literature paper to be taken.

272. The English Association have also reviewed the whole question of Examinations in English in their Pamphlet No. 37, *English Papers in Examinations for Pupils of School Age in England and Wales.* They recommend that in all examinations at the Senior stage, *i.e.*, the First

School Examination, English should be a compulsory subject, and that there should be at least two papers, one on Composition and one on Literature. The Composition paper should comprise, as well as an Essay, other tests in continuous composition, constructive exercises, and tests of elementary critical power.

The whole matter of examinations is still in the stage of experiment, and we are reluctant to make any final recommendation upon them. We are conscious of the deadening effect of too much uniformity. Thus we note the various objections which are raised to the value of an essay as an examination test—such as those mentioned by the Investigators appointed by the Secondary School Examination Council, "that there is no subject in which Examiners are more liable to differ in their estimate of the value of an exercise, and no subject from which it is more difficult to eliminate the element of chance." For these reasons we do not urge that the writing of an essay should be compulsory, though we by no means suggest that examinations which make it compulsory should cease to do so. But we are strongly of opinion that in all these examinations English should be compulsory to the extent of including, either in the form of a précis or otherwise, a test of power to grasp the meaning of a piece of English of appropriate difficulty, whatever regulations may be made as regards the essay or the literature paper.

273. In the Second or Higher School Examination, for pupils of eighteen or above, it is recommended by the English Association "that all candidates, whatever subject or group of subjects they offer, should be required to pass in English Essay." Here we think it best to recommend that all candidates should be tested in the understanding and use of English, and to leave it to examining bodies to require an essay, or other tests, or both, as they may think proper. With the question of University Scholarship Examinations we have dealt in Chapter VII, but we repeat that potential scholarship winners should never be encouraged to suppose it worth

their while to aim at a high standard of achievement in other subjects at the expense of competency in the use of English. No special attainment in Latin Verse or Mathematics can really be deemed satisfactory if it prevents the student from acquiring a fair mastery of his own language.

274. We do not suggest that successful examination in the use of English presents no difficulty. As Mr. Hartog observes in his evidence, "the field for real originality, on the part of the great majority of pupils in Latin and Greek, History, Geography, Arithmetic, Algebra, Botany or Chemistry is so small as to be almost negligible. A person can only show individuality when he has acquired some technical mastery of the medium through which that individuality is expressed. "Language," he continues, "is the only medium of which the average child has a technical mastery, and, in the use of that medium, he can be not only promising, but intrinsically original." To arrive at a just appreciation, in terms of marks, of such originality and individuality is not an easy matter, but it is essential, if the essay test is to help, not hinder, the teaching. Nor are the other English tests which we have been advocating easy of application. "It is not very easy," says Sir Stanley Leathes, "to find Examiners of ingenious invention to take an interest in this class of work." He believes, however, that there is almost no limit to the variety of the tests which ingenuity may suggest.

(*b*) Examinations in Literature.

275. Yet the difficulties involved in examinations in the use of language are slight in comparison with those of examining in literature. Examinations, we have said, provide a test and a stimulus. But can all teaching be tested; is the stimulus always in the right direction? "Every teacher knows," says Mr. Hartog, "that examinations do effectively control the class-rooms of our Secondary Schools."* The control necessarily tends to encourage those subjects and that type of teaching to which examina-

* *Examinations and their relation to culture and efficiency.*

tion tests can be most conveniently applied. Can it without danger be exercised upon the teaching of Literature? Some eminent witnesses think not. Thus the Headmaster of Sherborne appealed to us to throw our weight into the scale against examinations. He thought that English teaching in schools would gain greatly "if examinations of all kinds were reduced to vanishing point, and that examinations prevented schools from doing all sorts of things that they might otherwise do." The Headmaster of Eton told us that at Eton all Forms did some English literature, on the average for nearer two hours a week than one, but it was not the usual practice for boys to take the "English books" in the School Certificate Examination. He feared that examination might tend to spoil the teaching. We have referred already to the dubious welcome accorded to the paper in English Literature in the Common Entrance Examination by the Headmasters of the Preparatory Schools, and the doubts expressed as to its effect upon the teaching. Mr. Sharwood Smith, Mr. Barton and other witnesses were also apprehensive on this point.

276. But for good or ill the examination system is with us. To exempt Literature alone from its scope would simply exclude the teaching of Literature from a number of schools. Nothing less than the total abolition of the examination system would serve the turn of those who object to examinations in English, and to make such a recommendation, even if we desired to make it, would be entirely futile. Some schools may be so fortunate as to be able to pay due regard to literature independently of examinations. But they must remember that other schools are not so placed. "It may be held," says Mr. Hartog,* "and I should agree, that culture is as individual a thing as conscience; that culture may be killed, that it cannot be caught, by examinations. Yet teachers who realise all this, who think examinations in their subject mischievous rather than helpful, implore the authorities to include it in every possible examination syllabus. Why? Because, under the present *régime*, a subject that is

not examined in is likely to disappear speedily from our teaching curricula." Sir Stanley Leathes informed us that the Sub-Committee, consisting of Professors Chadwick, Herford, Mawer, Sir Walter Raleigh and the late Professor Moorman, who framed the English regulations in the new Class I. Civil Service Examination, had been unanimous as to the difficulty of examining on literature, but they had recommended its inclusion among the options of the examination because they felt that to omit it altogether would react injuriously on the teaching of English literature in Universities and elsewhere. We have no doubt that their recommendation was in the circumstances to the interest of the study of Literature.

We are satisfied, then, that in most schools the teaching of literature is bound to ally itself with the examination system. Yet this alliance should involve no subserviency on the part of the teaching. Here we are faced by a difficult problem, and can offer no perfect solution of it. We can only suggest the lines upon which the nearest approach to a solution may be found.

277. In the first place the examination must be in literature, not in something else. The examiner must not suggest to the teacher a method of substitution as an easy way out of their common difficulties. In this respect there has undoubtedly been much improvement in recent years, at any rate in examinations on set books. The old type of paper, treating the text mainly as a field for grammatical exercises and explanation of allusions, and eked out with excursions into biography, history and geography, survives to-day mainly as a target for the belated critic. Most examination questions on particular books concern themselves nowadays almost entirely with the actual content of the books themselves. But all such questions are not necessarily good ones. A good question, almost as much as a good answer, should show the questioner's familiarity with the book. No type of question is commoner than, *e.g.* :—"Write an appreciation of *Childe Harold.*" Such questions not only involve no knowledge in the asking, but

frequently they can be, and actually are, answered without that first-hand knowledge which is the only knowledge worth having or testing.

278. The control of the syllabus, again, should not be left to an examining body. The English Association, in the pamphlet already referred to, recommend that Literature should be a compulsory subject in the First School Examination, provided that each school should, to suit its own peculiar circumstances, draw up for itself a list of texts to be studied, and should determine for itself the lines on which its syllabuses should be treated. "Purely external examinations in English Literature, in which there is no direct contact between the Examiner and the teacher, cannot," they say, "be approved. . . . Since the style of question set determines the method of teaching, examining bodies usurp functions which properly belong to the school." The Investigators already mentioned state in their report that they considered the question how far it is desirable to multiply options or to allow schools to offer their own syllabus. "A certain amount of latitude," they say, "is clearly desirable; on the other hand, every increase in the number of alternatives increases the difficulty of equating papers and questions." We think that an examination on set books should leave the teacher of literature as free as practical considerations allow to draw up his own syllabus and to adopt his own methods.

279. There is, of course, the alternative of doing without a Syllabus and substituting a General Literature paper for one on particular books The Investigators say: "On the whole the General Literature paper seems more suitable at a rather later stage, and papers on Set-books are sufficient at the School Certificate stage." On the other hand the Board of Education, in their examinations for teachers, adopt the reverse practice: in the Preliminary Certificate Examination a general literature paper is set, while in the Final Training College Examination a definite syllabus is prescribed. It is, we think, a real misfortune when examinations dictate the whole syllabus of study for a school, or

for any part of a school, and we should like to see opportunities given to candidates at the School Certificate stage, and still more at the conclusion of the two years' Advanced Courses in schools, for showing their acquaintance with and appreciation of literature outside the range of prescribed books or a prescribed period. The Investigators point out that in a General Literature paper " the difficulty is to avoid questions that encourage the reading of manuals of literary history or the reproduction of lecture notes, instead of first-hand acquaintance with great authors." This difficulty we do not think insuperable, nor, as we have shown, is it peculiar to the General Literature paper. At the same time it is a real difficulty, which we do not wish to minimize. It is easy to say that the questions must be such as can only be answered by those who have read the actual texts of prose and verse, and for which lecture notes, text-books, and manuals of literature will not suffice. It is not equally easy to set a series of examination papers on such lines. The absence of a syllabus by no means precludes the possibility of cramming; there is, indeed; a danger that, unless the papers are set with exceptional care and skill, such absence may lead to a discontinuance of steady reading and the substitution of lessons that attempt to anticipate the examiner's questions—a worse and duller form of cramming than even the unintelligent study of a text-book. Such a question as " Write an appreciation of the literary work of one of the following authors : Herrick, Gray, Burke, Keats, Ruskin " is obviously bad; it gives a candidate who has studied a handbook a positive advantage over one who has tried to read original authors and so covered much less ground. On the other hand, " Choose one lyric by each of the following and write a short appreciation of it " is not in itself bad, but it belongs to a class of questions which, if not sparingly used and discriminatingly varied, will be easily anticipated and specially prepared for. Another type of question, *e.g.*, " What are Browning's views on life and religion?" " What are the distinctive features of the poetry of any three of the following poets? "

is unsuitable because it requires knowledge and experience of life beyond the candidate's range. The critical judgments for which it asks can only be based on information derived at secondhand. A better type of question is that which itself offers a criticism and asks the candidate to confirm or refute it from the evidence of his own reading.

280. Questions in General Literature need then to be set with especial care, but we think that they can be included with advantage. A good examination can be of great service to the teacher in communicating experience, suggesting fresh ideas and exposing stereotyped methods, and we think that it will be aided in producing these results by looking beyond the books definitely prescribed for study. We take the following passage from a pamphlet on the Teaching of English* submitted to us by the Headmaster of Rugby: "The problem how to 'test' wisely becomes harder when the 'preparation' is done on books chosen, not for the information they convey (*e.g.* History and Geography books) but for their literary qualities. Part of the difficulty is that books in entirely different languages are still often prepared, and the work actually tested, in one and the same way. Questions of the same kind are often set on 30 lines of Ovid, 50 of Dumas and three pages of Shakespeare—where two languages are foreign and one the mother tongue, two living and one dead. Or the issue is confused between books read for information and books read for their literary qualities; and two series of similar questions will be set on six pages of a History Text Book and on six pages of, say, Stevenson's 'Inland Voyage.'" The "testing" referred to is of course that done by the teacher himself, and the quotation indicates the prevalence of class-room methods of teaching literature which ought to be obsolete. Under these methods the suitability of an English book for reading in class is made to depend upon the scope it offers for "work"—work, that is, of the kind expected in older established subjects. Where class-room

* *Rugby School: Notes on the Teaching of English in the Lower Middles.*

teaching of English is of this type we can readily understand and share Headmasters' distrust of it. But prescribed books are often studied after this narrow fashion, and the pupil learns from the outset to look on literature merely as a task. We appreciate the great opportunities which the Investigators had for considering the whole question, and we are not in essential conflict with them, but we suggest that a combination of general questions with questions on set books might prove in the end beneficial to those who tend to convert literature into a mere knowledge subject, or to restrict the attention of their pupils to particular books prescribed for examination.

281. In many Examinations for the Higher Certificate a distinction is drawn between "books for special study" and "books for general reading." We approve this distinction, on the understanding that the special "study" is not to be the mere accumulation of knowledge that we have already deprecated but the study of the things that really matter—the spirit of a book, the development of the thought, the connexion of sentence with sentence, paragraph with paragraph, chapter with chapter, the construction of the novel or drama, the beauties of metaphor and simile, the harmonies of prose and verse, the characteristics of style and diction. And the ideal examiner we take to be one who can devise questions to elicit this sort of work from candidates, not the reproduction of lecturers' pronouncements.

282. What is the relation of the ideal examiner to the ideal teacher? Sometimes, as we have shown, a teacher of literature may gratuitously restrict his own scope, through adherence to traditional methods of teaching other subjects, and then the examiner may be able to widen his outlook and convey fresh ideas to him. But with the ideal teacher the resources of the examiner are taxed to the uttermost. In Literature far more than in anything else the range of the examiner tends to be incommensurate with that of the best teacher. The latter will be constantly experimenting, and clearly he should be invited to do so. Many teachers

set great store by the cultivation of original work on the part of their pupils, or by dramatic performance. It would be a misfortune should the examination system rule such work out of court : the examiner should accordingly apply himself to the problem of how to test it without doing it injury. He too will be constantly experimenting, and though the difficulties in the way may sometimes appear insuperable we are satisfied that there is still great possibility of fresh achievement in the art of examining. In any case the importance of the issue at stake renders it imperative that every effort should be made to solve the various problems that arise.

On this matter of the fields into which only the most skilful and discerning examiner can successfully follow the teacher Mr. Barton's evidence was particularly clear and full, and similar views were expressed by several other witnesses. Mr. Barton sharply distinguished between the *art* and the *science* of English teaching. He made it clear that under the heading " science " he included not merely the study of the structure of language but also the scientific treatment of English authors. This scientific treatment, he said, was what examinations could and did test. " Four-fifths of the ordinary examination paper, on, say, Chaucer or Milton—contexts, meanings, parallels, allusions and so forth—was science rather than art." This scientific treatment of literature, he said, was also emphasized by the prevalent idea (to which he strongly objected) that grammar and literature should be entrusted to the same teacher. But, though important, it was not what the teaching of literature primarily meant to him. The teaching of literature meant to him essentially the sympathetic, creative, appreciative treatment of literature. To examine on this was very difficult. It was certainly not to be done by finding out what a boy did not know. If a wide choice of questions was given, and the questions were simple, it was perhaps possible to find out what a boy liked and felt. But many boys of 16, though they were beginning to feel something, had as yet no power of expression.

The same point is succinctly put by a Rugby master who reports, in the pamphlet already mentioned, on the suitability of *Sohrab and Rustum* for reading in Form: 'Very good; so good that they could not be examined on it."

283. The examiner is bound to ask for knowledge, but it must be knowledge which matters, which counts towards appreciation, towards seeing a work as a whole. Thus an examination paper on a historical essay of Macaulay's *read as literature* should not be indistinguishable from a history paper. It is possible for the examiner to afford opportunities for showing power of appreciation, and he should recognise and value any indications of such power. Here again, however, he needs to walk most warily. It would be fatal to encourage formulas for the purpose of expressing feeling and admiration. But a good examiner can often read to some extent between the lines, and judge by indirect means what the study of literature has meant to a particular candidate, though the allotting of marks may prove to be a matter of perplexity.

It is possible for an oral examination, far better than a written one, to take cognizance of such teaching as we have now in mind, and we agree with the English Association* in holding that "if examination in Composition and English Literature is to be complete and thorough, some part of it at all stages should be oral." There are, of course, practical difficulties, but, as the English Association point out, most existing examinations in French and German include some oral test, and there is therefore no reason to think that such difficulties are insuperable. An oral examination would put a premium on the oral treatment of literature which we desire to encourage, and it could be adapted far more easily than a written examination to variety of experiment in the teaching. A school may, for instance, find that interest in literature can best be fostered by means of dramatic work: only through an oral examination could the value of such work be in-

* Pamphlet No. 37.

quired into. We urge very strongly that oral examination in English should be resorted to more frequently as affording the best means of lessening the angle between the view of the examiner and that of the teacher, and as attaining a liveliness and certainty which is impossible in a purely written examination.

To secure the most inspiring teaching of literature we do not depend upon examinations, though even the best teacher will, in certain parts of his work, gain help from them. But in the best teaching there must be something which transcends any recognition which even an oral examination can bestow. The appreciation of literature must, we feel, be its own reward; the suggestion of an equivalent in marks introduces a jarring note. Nor do we depend necessarily upon the specialist who has won distinction in an Honour School of English. The best teacher of literature, as Mr. Barton said, may be in a sense an amateur. Yet many persons, doubtless, upon whose mind and character literature exercises an abiding influence, owe it to the examination system that they ever made acquaintance with literature at all. The part of the examiner is to bring as many as possible to the starting point, to accompany them to his furthest limit, and then to bid them pass on, with the ideal teacher, beyond his range.

III.—THE DRAMA AS AN EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITY.

Introductory.

284. Owing to historical circumstances there was a complete breach between dramatic art in England and national education in all its forms from the middle of the seventeenth to the closing years of the nineteenth century. Hence it has only recently begun to be realised that drama played a very important part in the English School and University system of instruction in the reigns of the Tudors

and the early Stuarts. The practice began with the acting of Classical plays, usually those of Seneca, Plautus or Terence. These plays were followed by neo-Latin dramas from the pens of continental humanists or written by English scholars themselves. Though the performances often took place on recreative or ceremonial occasions, they had a definitely educational aim. As one of the Oxford academic playwrights states, their purpose was to make the students "well acquainted with Seneca or Plautus . . . to try their voices, and confirm their memories; to frame their speech; to conform them to convenient action."

In the latter part of the period English plays were also performed, with similar objects. These plays were not borrowed from the repertory of the public theatres, but were written for the students by schoolmasters or University lecturers. Apart from the Universities, Eton and Westminster, St. Paul's and Merchant Taylors', King's School, Canterbury, and Shrewsbury were the chief centres of this educational dramatic activity. Many a boy must have learnt from acting a part in the performances "to fit," in Thomas Heywood's well-known words, "his phrases to his action and his action to his phrases, and his pronunciation to both."

In the present day, with the increasing recognition of the importance of speech-training in its widest aspects, this favourite Renaissance method is being revived. We have referred to it incidentally in the course of our Report, and we here deal with it in greater detail, in its application to modern educational conditions.

Elementary and Secondary Schools.

285. For purposes of school work the Drama may be considered in three aspects: (1) as something to be written; (2) as something to be read; (3) as something to be acted.

The writing of plays in school is a form of English composition, and a very valuable and practical form.

If the adoption of play-making, as an exercise in writing, became more general, some part of the energy of teacher and pupil might be diverted from the unprofitable task of premature essay writing. In a sense children are primitive beings, and the essay is not a primitive form. Epics existed before essays; the world had a large body of narrative and dramatic literature before it arrived at the essay; and yet it is precisely this difficult and fragile form of composition that immature pupils are expected to produce. Children know what a story or a play is long before they know what an essay is. They can understand writing a story for the class magazine, or a play for a class performance, but, for them, the " essay " has no purpose.

The collective composition of a play may be attempted by quite young pupils. As soon as boys are old enough to enjoy a ballad or a story in verse they should try to dramatize it. The defence of the bridge by Horatius is an exciting story, and the class will like to " do it in action." But action without words is only half the fun. The class will therefore have to " suit the words to the action." They must decide the point at which they will begin, the speaker who is to open the scene and the words he is to utter. The sentences approved by the class will be written down by the teacher (who is merely the scribe), and when something like a scene has been achieved, it can be tried over, and its shortcomings detected and corrected. The one scene can be expanded to two or more as the exigencies of the story demand, and so a play is made. A familiar story or fairy tale or a famous historical incident can be dramatized in the same way.

An older class will not be content with a simple scene or two of which the plan is more or less ready made, but will like to invent a drama of its own. History is again a fruitful source. Consider the training involved in the composition of a drama on the subject, say, of Sir Walter Raleigh! There is the actual work of planning the whole drama; then of planning each scene, of fitting the characters with becoming words, and of making the scenes accord

with the conditions of time and space—of time and space in the artistic, historical sense, and of time and space in the practical, theatrical sense. This is training in the writing of English such as periodical attempts at essays will never give. It is, in the fullest sense, practical English composition.

286. The drama, considered as reading (except in the higher forms of Secondary Schools), usually means Shakespeare. A class that has composed and acted its own plays is in a much better position to read other plays than the class that makes its first acquaintance with drama in the form of a printed book called "The Merchant of Venice." Shakespeare is an inevitable and necessary part of school activity because he is not only our greatest English writer but because his work is almost entirely in dramatic form. But it is not always sufficiently recognised that Shakespeare presents great difficulties. When we sometimes slightingly contrast English indifference to Shakespeare with German enthusiasm we forget that German-Shakespeare is written in a language that every German understands and that English-Shakespeare is written in a language that every Englishman does not understand. Much of Shakespeare's speech for reasons to which we have before alluded* is so remote as to be in an unfamiliar tongue. Some poets (*e.g.*, Wordsworth) are verbally easy, and some poets (*e.g.*, Francis Thompson) are verbally difficult. In many passages Shakespeare is not only difficult, but archaic as well; and thus he seems doubly unsuitable for young readers. Fortunately he is saved for the schools by his wonderful power of re-telling a story in dramatic form, and his equally wonderful power of characterization, and, we may add, his incomparable mastery of word-music. Indeed, it is Shakespeare the poet as much as Shakespeare the dramatist to whom we must introduce our pupils. The teacher's business is to give Shakespeare's scenes and characters the best chance of impressing themselves naturally on a class, and his task, therefore, is to remove the

* *See* Chapter VII., § 204.

impediments. Now extensive annotation will not only not remove the impediments: it will actually add more. How can such a passage as this be "explained" to boys and girls of fourteen, who are, nevertheless, quite able to respond to the marvellous dramatic appeal of *Macbeth?*

> . . . . . if the assassination
> Could trammel up the consequence, and catch,
> With his surcease, success; that but this blow
> Might be the be-all and the end-all here,
> But here, upon this bank and shoal of time,
> We'd jump the life to come.

In vocabulary this passage is not specially difficult, but in significance it is almost inexplicable. Until the reader can envisage the great and subtle sweeps of phrase with the occasional poise upon some telling word, he cannot read Shakespeare fully.

What, then, is the teacher to do? He must do nothing at all with Shakespeare until he is moderately sure that for himself the impediments have all been removed. Shakespeare is not like a musician who can be read at sight. For this reason it seems inadvisable that the first reading of a play should be undertaken by the young pupils themselves. If Shakespeare were easy, there would be no better way of class-reading than an immediate plunge into part-by-part delivery; as he is difficult it is better that the class should get their first impressions from a skilled and understanding reader, as the teacher must be assumed to be. No pause should ever be made for explanations. Such difficulties as are merely verbal should have been dealt with beforehand—a vocabulary should have been prepared by the teacher and treated as an exercise in itself, apart from the reading. A bare equivalent of the unusual words will make intelligible the music of such a passage as this:—

> Make me a willow cabin at your gate,
> And call upon my soul within the house;
> Write loyal cantons of contemned love,
> And sing them loud even in the dead of night
> Halloo your name to the reverberate hills,
> And make the babbling gossip of the air
> Cry out "Olivia."

The difficulties that are more deeply implicated must simply be passed over. We have to accept as inevitable the fact that many passages of Shakespeare cannot be understood by children. A discussion of Shakespeare's language and style can be a valuable and delightful lesson for senior pupils; but it is a lesson that has nothing to do with the drama, and certainly nothing to do with a dramatic reading.

287. A very brief sketch of the Elizabethan playhouse and the conditions of performance might very well precede the reading of the first play. It would be an additional advantage if a model of the Shakespearian theatre could be exhibited in the school.

The selected play should be read through as quickly as possible. When it has been read, it can be discussed in pleasant and informal conversation—it can be treated as something delightful to talk about; and then it can be attempted as a real dramatic reading, with parts allotted.

Teachers will naturally use their discretion in choosing the plays to be read in class. They will not begin with *A Winter's Tale*, or *Cymbeline*, or ever attempt such adult plays as *All's Well that Ends Well* and *Measure for Measure*. They must not allow their enthusiasm to reach the height of a belief that there is a sacred English institution called "Shakespeare," all of which is verbally inspired. In plays that children might read there are dull passages that are better omitted—the tediously protracted dialogue, for instance, between Malcolm and Macduff in Act iv. Sc. iii. of *Macbeth*. Between Act 2, Sc. ii. of *Hamlet* and Act 2, Sc. ii. of *The Merchant of Venice* there is a wide world of difference, and we must not pretend to children that they are equally splendid. And there are minor plays that are better left alone in school. So few plays can be read that it seems a pity to spend time upon these minor ones when there is so much that is better. Adult students might very profitably attempt a reading of an unusual play like *Troilus and Cressida*; young pupils should be kept to the normal course. Enthusiasm for Shakespeare in school

is very delightful; but a teacher to whom *Twelfth Night* and *The Taming of the Shrew* are both equally Shakespeare is not a person who can be safely trusted with Shakespeare at all.

288. After the age of about fourteen the range can be widened. *The Rivals* or *She Stoops to Conquer* makes an excellent class play, and *The Critic* can be great fun; so can *The Knight of the Burning Pestle.* With senior pupils the adventurous teacher may go earlier and later—earlier to such things as one of the Nativity plays, *Everyman* or some of the Tudor Interludes, and later to the printed drama of modern times. How far the translated drama should be used is a matter about which opinions may properly differ. It may be pointed out, however, that FitzGerald's adaptation of the two great Calderon dramas is almost as much a part of English literature as his paraphrase of *Omar.* The purist may object that Professor Gilbert Murray's translations are not Greek: but he will hardly deny that they are excellent English. Whatever is read should, as a rule, be in the main current of literature. Young pupils should not be confused by an early exploration of backwaters that lead nowhere.

289. The drama, considered as acting, will take three forms:—

(*a*) the performance of scenes or pieces in class,
(*b*) the public performance of plays by pupils,
(*c*) visits by pupils to professional performances of suitable plays.

If it is considered necessary to offer a defence of dramatic performances as a part of education, we may say that the drama is an ancient and honoured form of literature that has enlisted the powers of the greatest poets, and afforded rational delight to a hundred generations of civilised beings. The sooner a child becomes familiar with the best forms of theatrical amusement the less likely is he to be permanently attracted by the worst. It is a most important, though often forgotten, function of educa-

tion to teach young men and women the use of leisure, and the best possibilities of rational amusement. The frequently heard criticism, that taking children to the theatre will not help them to earn a living, indicates a gross misunderstanding of the purpose of education. Education is preparation for life, not merely for livelihood: and any school activity that contributes to the amenities of existence and intercourse is a necessary and laudable part of the educational system.

The pupils who take part in performances of plays must learn to speak well and to move well, to appreciate character and to express emotion becomingly, to be expansive yet restrained, to subordinate the individual to the whole and to play the game, to be resourceful and self-possessed and to overcome or mitigate personal disabilities. It will hardly be suggested that these are negligible accomplishments Incidentally it has been found that boys or girls usually regarded as stupid, and incapable of learning, have exhibited unsuspected ability in acting and have gained a new interest in themselves and their possibilities. Ability to do something is the first ingredient of self-respect. On this point we may quote the evidence of a witness: "Dramatisation by children had a marvellous effect on their speech, producing clear articulation, and it also had a valuable effect on their characters, as children would work for the success of the play and not for themselves. It afforded a training in judgment, in self-confidence, and in general alertness."

The pupils who only look on miss something of all this, but they get a useful sense of participation in a school activity: and they get, too, something that the drama can specially give, the immediate sense of a completed thing, of an artistic whole with beginning, middle and end. It is unnecessary to dwell upon the educative value of a spectacle that shows, in a spirit of poetry and magnanimity, character in action, developing to greatness or lapsing to disaster, triumphing in apparent failure or failing in apparent success.

Class performances are joyous and instructive adventures. They may range from happy improvisations to a formal show on a special occasion. In their Elizabethan inadequacy of equipment they make an excellent introduction to the conditions of Shakespearian drama. A school performance, even with very limited resources, can be delightful and profitable to everybody. An Elementary Boys' School in South London recently gave a performance of *Richard II.* that could be witnessed with pleasure by any audience. The scenery and properties were very simple and were improvised in the school itself. The costumes were designed and executed by the teachers and parents in consultation, and achieved something like historical propriety. The total period occupied in preparation, from the first trial reading to the first performance, was twelve weeks, and that without dislocation of the ordinary school work. The youngest actor was ten, the oldest fourteen.

In many of the Secondary Schools performances of Shakespearian and other Elizabethan plays, of Euripides in Professor Gilbert Murray's translation, and of Gilbert and Sullivan operas have been given with credit to all concerned. Such performances have their inevitable shortcomings, but their spirit is sound, and we have had abundant testimony to their value as a means of education.

In districts where a genuine dialect survives there will probably be found some traditional fragments of old folk plays. It would seem to be a special duty of educational establishments to cherish this inheritance and to place it, in its best form, before the later generations as a true expression of the spirit of their fathers.

290. Visits to public performances of plays studied in class are an officially recognised form of educational activity. The Board of Education specifically allows them under Article 44 (*b*) of the Code, and we note with great pleasure that some Local Education Authorities have taken the admirable course of setting apart money for the provision

of dramatic performances for school children.* Such performances are a great privilege, in which remote rural districts are naturally unable to share; but for town schools it is a privilege that has its dangers as well as its delights. If we could be sure that pupils would see performances like the Hamlet of Forbes-Robertson, or the Portia of Ellen Terry—if we could merely be sure that they would see nothing that dishonoured the spirit of Shakespeare, we should urge upon teachers the fullest employment of their liberty; but we have to recognise frankly that professional performances may sometimes be precisely the sort of thing that children ought not to see. Boys and girls should never be allowed to see the wood-magic of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* destroyed by the protracted clowning of Bottom, or to find the flower-sweet loveliness of *Twelfth Night* sullied by extravagant orgies of would-be comic drunkenness. Better, far, the feebleness and inadequacy of a school performance than efficiency of this kind. It would be regrettable if, in the exercise of a precious liberty, teachers allowed their pupils to get their first acquaintance with Shakespeare on the stage from performances in which the sweetness of the music is soured, in which "time is broke and no proportion kept." The power of surrender to first impressions is one of the gifts of youth, but there are dangers in it; and teachers must therefore recognise their imperative duty of ensuring that a child's first impressions of Shakespeare shall not be misshapen. That does not mean that we must approach Shakespeare in an attitude of artificial solemnity. Shakespeare must not be made either unnaturally dull or unnaturally grotesque. He wrote his plays to give immediate pleasure to a miscellaneous audience, and he resented

* We learn with great regret that the District Auditor has surcharged the London County Council with the amount of the grant to cover the fees for the attendance of school children at Shakespearian performances. The matter is at present *sub judice*, and its legal aspect is not within our province. But we are strongly of opinion that means should be found of continuing this genuinely educational work, and that, if necessary, additional powers should be given to the Local Authorities for this purpose.

liberties with his text. Anything in our treatment that makes Shakespeare dull or distorted is a crime against his spirit—it is "from the purpose of playing."

291. It was in no inglorious time of our history that Englishmen delighted altogether in dance and song and drama, nor were these pleasures the privilege of a few or a class. It is a legitimate hope that a rational use of the drama in schools may bring back to England an unshamed joy in pleasures of the imagination and in the purposed expression of wholesome and natural feeling.

Sir Israel Gollancz in his evidence emphasised the importance of this element of joy in school work, and gave some account of his efforts to institute an annual "Shakespeare Day" on the 23rd April (unless this fell during the Easter holidays) as a bond between English-speaking children in the United Kingdom, the Dominions and the United States of America. We note too with satisfaction that the observance of Shakespeare Day has been officially recognised in the schools of France.

Day Continuation Schools.

292. Much of what has been said above in sections 286 to 291 applies not only to Elementary and Secondary, but to the new Day Continuation Schools. We have in Chapter V of our Report expressed our hope and expectation that the reading aloud, recitation and performance of plays will be a very important part of the English branch of the curriculum in Continuation Schools. We have pointed out that in the limited time available for the study of literature in these schools, and in dealing with pupils many of whom will have little natural inclination for such study, it is essential to gain their interest at once. By the very law of its being, a play, written to be acted before a miscellaneous audience in the space of two or three hours, must make an impression immediately if it is to do so at all. Hence it lends itself peculiarly to a scheme of education which must

always keep one eye on the clock, and which aims at being stimulating rather than profound.

Moreover as a play is intended to be spoken, it offers special opportunities to a teacher to combine the training of his pupils' speech, on which we have laid so much stress, with their training in literary appreciation. The parts should be distributed among the class, and even those who are not reading them can often be brought into the circle of active interest as members of a crowd or the retainers of a great house.

We are here not without some experience to go upon. We have pointed out that the conditions at the Royal Naval College, Dartmouth, are akin to those of a first-rate Continuation School, as we may hope to see it in the future. Mr. Pocock told us that "for reading aloud the drama was particularly valuable, and boys began to read dramatic pieces as soon as they entered the College, at about 14. At that age boys sometimes read their parts remarkably well, even unseen passages." He added that there was a Dramatic Society at the College.

At a Continuation School instituted for its younger employees by a great London firm, in anticipation of the "appointed day" under the Act of 1918, it was found that the pupils read with zest and appreciation several of the eighteenth century comedies. And we may here suggest that these and other prose comedies of a later date may, especially at first, be more serviceable for use in Continuation Schools than Shakespearian plays. According to the evidence of Professor Mais, of the R.A.F. Cadet College, Cranwell, "the cadets objected to Shakespeare because they found him long-winded." They liked Galsworthy's *Strife*, Shaw's *Arms and the Man*, *The School for Scandal*, *The Rivals* and *The Critic*. The Cranwell Cadets are drawn mainly from the Public Schools or the Navy and are, of course, considerably older than the pupils at Continuation Schools, but it will probably be found that their tastes in dramatic literature are not dissimilar.

Evening Institutes.

293. The value of dramatic performances in part time educational institutions has already been shown in some of the London Evening Institutes, generally under the direction of some inspiring teacher of English literature. Professor Murray's version of *Iphigenia in Aulis*, Stephen Phillips' *Paolo and Francesca*, Bernard Shaw's *Arms and the Man*, Robertson's *Caste*, the modern morality *Eager-Heart*, illustrate the variety of the ground covered.

Nor has Shakespeare been neglected. Admirable performances of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *As You Like It* were given by the girls and women students of a General Evening Institute in the west of London. Here, too, professional help in scenery, properties, production and make-up, was dispensed with, and the result was a fresh and charming exposition of Shakespearian comedy. The youngest actor of this band was sixteen and the oldest over thirty.

At Institutes where courses on Shakespeare or other dramatists are given, classes or adult students accompanied by their lecturer have attended performances at public theatres of plays that they are studying, or have made a pilgrimage to Stratford-on-Avon. Such visits have proved their educational value, and should be encouraged.

Training Colleges.

294. In the chapter of our Report dealing with Training Colleges, we have emphasised the great importance of utilising every means for the improvement of the speech and elocution of the future teacher. Much, of course, can be done by the lecturers on English, through the medium of debating and literary societies, or by phonetic training. But more distinctively dramatic methods can also be used with great advantage. Some of the London Training Colleges have been active in recent years in performing Elizabethan or modern plays, with noticeably beneficial

effect on the elocution and diction of the students. In at least one of these cases the high level attained was due to the fact that there is on the staff of the College, in addition to the lecturers on English, a lecturer specially appointed to deal with reading and recitation. As a result of the deputation from the British Drama League last year to the President of the Board of Education, we understand that proposals are being considered for introducing dramatic methods more widely into the Training College curriculum. This might involve the appointment on Training College staffs of lecturers of the type mentioned above, who would take in regard to dramatic art the same position as is held by teachers of music or pictorial art in regard to their special subjects. The effect upon the work of the Elementary Schools of teachers trained under these lecturers might be very far reaching.

The Universities.

295. The activities of the dramatic societies at Oxford and Cambridge are so well known that it is not necessary for us to do more than refer to them here. The University authorities have abandoned the attitude of their Elizabethan predecessors, and have sanctioned the performance not only of classical but of Shakespearian plays, and others written for the modern stage. The example of Oxford and Cambridge has been followed by the newer Universities and Colleges in London and throughout the country.

Many of these academic productions have reached a high level; they have been recreative in the best sense, and hitherto have had no direct connection with University studies. Recently, however, there has been a movement to bring dramatic training into the recognised educational curriculum. Thus we note with satisfaction that the London County Council has offered for annual competition two scholarships to be held at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art. The Authorities of the Central School of Speech-Training, held in the Albert Hall, are seeking University recognition. The Principal of the School

expressed to us in her evidence the hope that if the Institution were affiliated to the University of London, it would have the same effect upon the dramatic side of University life as the Slade School had had upon its artistic side. It is not our function to express an opinion upon the claims for recognition of individual institutions, but we hope that the University will seriously consider the possibility of granting a Diploma in Dramatic Art, similar to the Diploma in the Humanities, to students who have followed an approved course.

The University of Liverpool has recently taken the important step of appointing Mr. Granville Barker to a lectureship on the Art of the Theatre. We hope that there will be other similar appointments elsewhere. In the country where the plays of Shakespeare and Sheridan were written and acted, there should be University Chairs of Dramatic Literature. Professor Brander Matthews, who holds such a Chair at Columbia University, New York, has brought together models of theatres, from the days of the Greeks to our own, scenery of all kinds, and a large dramatic library. Similar collections would be of great value to students of the literature of the stage in this country.

In some of the American Universities, notably Harvard, instruction in play-writing and in theatrical production has been recognised as a branch of the English curriculum, and has, we understand, had successful practical results We note this with interest, though we have at present no evidence which would justify us in suggesting the inclusion of such a course in the range of English studies at our own Universities. But in general it may be said that America has given a valuable lead by fostering academic interest in the drama and in the theatrical art

The Popular Dramatic Revival

296. We have thought it advisable to confine our attention to dramatic activities in the various types of institutions—schools, colleges, or universities—

dealt with in the preceding chapters of this Report. But the whole tenor and spirit of the Report will, we hope, make it evident how warmly we welcome that revival of the popular stage which bids fair to restore to town and countryside in the twentieth century something of the spontaneous theatrical energies of the mediæval craft-guilds and the Tudor village players. This popular dramatic movement is educational in the wider sense of the word, and has thus fittingly been brought within the survey of the Adult Education Committee. In the Report of that Committee* interesting details will be found about the performances by the Norwich Players; the Dorsetshire village productions; the Boxford Masques; the Newbury Folk Festivals; the West Hoathly (Sussex) representations of translated Greek plays; the Steep (Hampshire) and Wensleydale (Yorkshire) rural performances. To these we may add the remarkable results achieved by the Glastonbury players, who have recently visited London.† And we note with interest the establishment at Birmingham of a Plays and Pageants Committee to encourage the study and appreciation of drama both as an educational and a recreative factor in schools and clubs.

Education and the Professional Stage.

297. And if we turn from the popular to the professional stage, we recognise the valuable services to national education rendered by the series of Shakespearian performances at the Court Theatre, the Victoria Hall (the "Old Vic") and the Stratford-on-Avon Memorial Theatre.

The work of the Everyman Theatre at Hampstead and of the Repertory Theatres at Manchester and Birmingham (the former of which has unfortunately had to close); the Phœnix Society productions of Seventeenth-century

* Pp. 247 and 272–4.

† One of our witnesses pointed out that there had been a similar revival of popular drama in South Wales, where plays in Welsh and in English were produced, and parties went from village to village and gave performances without fees.

and other classic plays; and the successful revivals of *The Beggar's Opera* and *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, all deserve appreciative record here. And we note with satisfaction that Miss Lena Ashwell, who organized a remarkable series of theatrical and operatic performances for the troops during the War, is continuing in peace time her efforts to popularize good plays. By arrangement with the Mayors of some of the London Boroughs a repertory company under her direction, the "Once-a-week Players" has given performances in various Town Halls. We hope to see this co-operation between the stage and municipal authorities extended to other parts of the country. In promoting such co-operation the recently founded British Drama League might well find one of its most fruitful activities.

Speech Training in School and on the Stage.

298. Finally, in relation to Drama as an educational activity, we wish to emphasize the need of training in speech and in correct reading of which we have had only too much evidence. That this need is not confined to school children will be obvious to everyone who has seen many plays of Shakespeare performed, or heard the Bible read in public. Few actors, readers or speakers seem to have learnt the elements of voice production: not many recognise that if they speak to five hundred people in a hall or a theatre as they would to five in a small room they will be inaudible. The actor, in particular, too often sacrifices the chance of being heard, without which he is nothing but a spectacle, to the delusive hope of appearing natural. But the business of art is not to be natural but to seem so. It is not in fact natural that Macbeth should talk in blank verse. But when Shakespeare chooses he can make it seem quite natural. And so an actor when addressing one or more people who are quite close to him should be able to seem to speak quite naturally while in fact speaking loud enough to be heard in the more distant parts of a large house. Few children

are going to become actors; but all will gain by learning how to speak: and no performance can take place in a school without showing how many children are at first incapable of making themselves heard even in a room of moderate size.

But the school drama is an opportunity for teaching something more than voice production. It is an opportunity for showing how prose, and especially verse, should be spoken. For both, of course, the most important thing is one which cannot be learnt in a lesson: it can only be caught by example and sympathy. Perfect reading can only be attained through complete intellectual and emotional identification with the meaning and mood of the writer. This can rarely be achieved in the schoolroom or indeed anywhere else. But it can be begun in school. And other things can be definitely taught. It will probably seldom be necessary to point out the absurd results ridiculed by Shakespeare ("All for your delight we are not here") which follow on ignoring the punctuation. But it will be very necessary, as every school, and it may be added every theatre, shows, to correct the opposite mistake of paying attention to nothing else but the stops. Shakespeare wrote both verse and prose; and when he wrote verse he did not mean to write prose. But if we speak his verse as it is often spoken—in this fashion:—

> "I cannot but remember such things were that were most precious to me."
>
> "Did heaven look on and would not take their part?"

we defeat his object and turn verse into prose.

This is the first and perhaps the worst mistake that can be made in speaking verse. Shakespeare wrote verse for its own sake, for the peculiar beauty and music and emotional power which is different from that of prose. Nothing can be worse than for an actor to throw away this wonderful weapon which Shakespeare has placed in his hands. And it is a weapon for the teacher too: for almost all children naturally love the music of verse.

But there is an opposite danger to which children, teachers and actors are all alike exposed. The easiest

way of learning verse is to emphasize violently the real or supposed accents and to make them the same in every verse. The child is apt to repeat his hymn after this fashion :—

God *moves* in *a* mysterious way
His wonders *to* perform;
He plants his footsteps *in* the sea
And rides *upon* the storm.

That is he lays the stress on the 2nd, 4th and other even syllables. But this ruins both the sense and the variety of the verse. The accents in the first line are on " God " and " mysterious," not on " moves " and still less on " a " : in the second line there is obviously no accent on " to " and in the third and fourth lines the main accent are on " sea " and " storm " and there should, of course be none at all on " in " or " upon " which the child will probably violently emphasize. And this method of destroying verse is by no means confined to children. Ask any ordinary person to read aloud verses from a newspaper or on a tombstone, and you are almost sure to get an exhibition of it. And one seldom goes to a performance of Shakespeare without hearing his lines exposed to such ugly and unintelligent delivery as—

There *is* a play to-night *before* the king :
One scene of *it* comes *near* the circumstance
Which *I* have told thee *of* my father's death :

said, that is, as if somebody had just asserted that there was no play to be played before the King or that a play was to be played behind the king : as if Hamlet's point was that it was he and no one else who had told Horatis about his father's death; as if, in fact, the three lines were a series of absurd statements.

The thing of course is still worse when it is Shakespeare's poetry at its highest which is treated in this fashion : as when Antony is made to ask pardon for himself in contras to someone else for whom pardon is not asked : to assent that, in contrast with someone else who is the opposite, he

himself is meek and gentle; and to contradict some assertion that Cæsar's body was not "the ruins of the noblest man.":

> O pardon *me*, thou bleeding piece of earth,
> That *I* am meek and gentle with these butchers!
> Thou *art* the ruins of the noblest man
> That ever lived in the tide of times.

The faults of manhood often begin in the schoolroom. This one certainly does. It appears to be little recognised as a fault either in or out of the schoolroom. Yet if English literature, and in particular English poetry, is to play the part which it ought to play both in our national education and our national life, it must be given its fair chance. And this is not given unless care is taken in reading aloud or recitation to preserve as much as possible both of the poet's music and of his meaning. Perfect saying of verse will always be a rare thing. But it has seemed to us that it might be worth while to point out here some of the commonest and most obvious faults that bar the way to it. There will be no better opportunity for correcting them than the play read or performed in class. This, following on some instruction in the elements of phonetics and of voice production, ought to do much to raise the whole level of reading and speaking both of prose and verse. The rendering of literature by the voice is not a mere matter of mechanical correctness, but is the final result of sympathetic entry into the spirit of the writer, and without it no education in letters can be complete.

IV.—BOOKS AND LIBRARIES.

299. If English literature is to be a real influence in the national life, nothing that can help to make books attractive can be deemed unimportant.

We need the co-operation of (A) publishers, (B) booksellers, (C) public libraries, (D) education authorities.

Publishers.

Some publishers, including the Oxford and Cambridge University Presses, have already rendered an inestimable

service by the publication of sets of English classics on a large or small scale. Certain series that played a useful part some years ago—*e.g.*, the Temple Classics, Morley's Universal Library—have not been kept up, whether because of inadequate response or because the price at which they were issued left no margin for profit; and the continuous increase in the cost of production has necessitated the raising of the price of such series as still fortunately survive, and will make it difficult to produce fresh volumes at the old prices. Yet nothing is more vital for the spread of good literature than the supply of good editions of standard authors at a moderate cost. Carlyle's dictum that "the true modern University is a collection of books" is not true without important qualification; yet the publisher who makes good literature easily accessible in a desirable form is the best of educational missionaries. As English literature takes its proper place in education, and a generation grows up accustomed to read it and with the wish to possess it, the response to every enlightened attempt to bring good literature within everybody's reach should be more and more encouraging.

For schools, again, the editions specially produced for lessons in literature were generally unattractive in the extreme, but there has been a remarkable and progressive improvement in this respect. From the first, the book used in an English literature lesson should be one which the pupils may be induced to handle with an affection that the ordinary scholastic manual is unlikely to evoke. For most English lessons a clearly and pleasantly printed text is the first consideration. Where notes or excursuses are needed, it is well that their subordination should be marked by a difference of type. Annotation has been grievously overdone in the past. In the reaction against it, which has been proceeding for some years, it is important to see that scholarly standards are maintained. Both teacher and class may often profit from the fine scholarship of an approved editor; but casual and inexact notes are worse than none at all.

Booksellers.

300. The modern bookseller's shop is too often chiefly a sale-room for stationery, fountain-pens, newspapers and indifferent fiction. No doubt we shall be told that it is a case of "demand and supply." But there is reason to believe that the supply is less intelligent than the demand. This is obviously the case with many station bookstalls, where the traveller often buys trash because he can find nothing else. An educated bookseller is in a position to render a great service to the community: and we believe that the English teachers of the near future will, in turn, be glad to lend such a benefactor all the assistance in their power by encouraging their pupils to become his customers. In every town the bookseller's shop should become what in university cities and in one or two other favoured spots it is already, a centre of literary and artistic interest and enlightenment; a place where the best books, new and old, can be inspected at leisure.

Public Libraries.

301. The hopefulness of the generation which first established free libraries has been succeeded by some natural regrettable despondency because municipal libraries too often reflect the low literary standards of the communities in which they are established. "Books cannot teach the use of books," and even the provision of good books does not ensure that good use will be made of them. But a public library under enlightened management can be of immense assistance. (1) Every municipal library should seek to possess a complete collection of standard English authors, with copies of all the critical works, biographies, and books of reference needed by students of the English language and literature. (2) The juvenile section should contain a number of sets of the best novels and tales of adventure and the best books for boys' and girls' reading: useful lists have been issued by some of the local education authorities, and by other compilers. A children's

reading-room, if managed by someone who really understands children's needs, is extremely useful at holiday times. "Story-telling afternoons" during the Christmas holidays, organised by one public authority, offer an example worthy of imitation. (3) Though the principle of easy access to books is more generally understood than it used to be, there are still many public libraries where the use of books is restricted by vexatious formalities. (4) The purchase of sets of plays—to include "Temple" and "Mermaid" dramas and the best modern English plays and verse translations of ancient and foreign masterpieces—would render possible in many localities the formation of reading societies and dramatic clubs that would foster literary interest and taste.* (5) Occasional lectures on books in the library, or on the literary associations of the district, are also helpful. (6) New books should be brought to the notice of readers not merely by the publication of lists but by placing the books where they can be inspected. (7) The official librarian's besetting temptation is to become a custodian rather than a distributor of books. His first duty should be to make his library widely useful and attractive. For this he requires wide knowledge of books, sympathies with many tastes and needs, a readiness to learn and a willingness to serve. (8) We attach great importance to co-operation between the public library committee and the local education committee. On this point something will be said in the next section. (9) The closer the connection between education and the public library the more likely we are to secure a larger number of enlightened librarians who understand not only complicated systems of cataloguing, but also the insides of the books which they handle.

Rural Libraries have been established in a number of counties with the invaluable assistance of the Carnegie United Kingdom Trustees. The library is generally located in the village school, sometimes in the village institute. The usual plan is a small permanent library supplemented by

* *See* English Association Pamphlet, No. 34.

boxes of books issued from a central county library and changed at intervals of six months. That it is not impossible to establish and maintain a successful village library without extraneous assistance is shown by the interesting experiment recorded in the case of a Hampshire village by Miss A. Sayle in *Village Libraries : a Guide to their Formation and Upkeep.* The success attained in this case seems to have been largely due to the founder's skill in enlisting the co-operation of all classes in the village, to the recognition of the simple truth that a village library must be mainly recreative and must give the villagers what they want, not what other people esteem to be good for them, and to a number of sensible rules for smooth and efficient working.

Education Authorities.

302. The provision made for libraries for Elementary Schools varies much in the different areas. Especially noteworthy is the scheme of the London County Council for the interchange of reading-books, which has passed beyond the experimental stage and is now in operation throughout the administrative county under 93 local committees of head teachers. The number of volumes in circulation is approximately two millions, and the improvement in English in London Elementary Schools during the last few years is attributed, in part at least, to the increased facilities for reading afforded by the scheme.*

In some towns, as, for example, in Halifax and Bradford, there is close co-operation between the schools and the municipal libraries with most beneficial results. Pains are taken to prevent the reading habit formed in the elementary school from lapsing when the pupil leaves; the children are taken to the town-libraries, or hear a lecture from the librarian, and they receive a ticket of membership of the public library on the day of leaving school. Libraries for general reading are furnished to the schools—in some cases on loan, in other cases as a permanent possession—

* For a fuller account of this Scheme, *see* Appendix III.

the cost being generally borne by the education authority, while the labelling and cataloguing are done by the staff of the municipal library. We are advised that the management of the scheme is best put into the hands of a sub-committee consisting of members of the library and education committees, and including representatives of the head-teachers, with the librarian as executive officer. For a testimony to the value of such arrangements, the experience of Halifax may be quoted. Here we are told that "users of the children's libraries not only show an increased vocabulary, but also a wider range of interest and general intelligence: and when school-days are over a larger percentage use the public libraries, and use them more intelligently."

But, whatever may be done or omitted to be done by external authorities, every Elementary School can and should possess its own library. We have been told of one school, in an industrial district, where, after an initial grant of 20*l.* by the local education authority, the children in three or four years built up a library of nearly two thousand books by means of a subscription of a halfpenny a week; and of another school, in London, where the boys' and girls' contributions of one penny a week have added 500 volumes in two years.

Scarcely less important than the provision of a good library is the encouragement amongst the children themselves of a desire to possess the books which they have found attractive. An ambition to form a collection of "Books for the Bairns" may develop into something loftier in later years. Teachers can do much to awaken or stimulate such tastes.

303. The problem of libraries for Continuation Schools, Secondary Schools, and Training Colleges is of course a much more complicated one in which the conditions will vary infinitely from one institution to another. Only a few general remarks can be offered here. In all these cases a good library is wanted both for use and for delight. In the case of the smaller Secondary Schools Miss M. M.

Wilson told us that "a yearly grant of even 5*l.* in each school for the provision of good fiction would do much to oust from the affections of the schoolboy and girl the less desirable literature they are able to procure for themselves." The provision of a good library is a duty at least as incumbent upon school authorities as the provision of a good laboratory. For the choice of books (though not at present in the department of fiction) the lists of the English Association offer invaluable help, and every school librarian should consult them. Students who specialise in English, and those who teach them, cannot do their work satisfactorily without access to better libraries than have hitherto been common even in the richer and more fortunate schools. Moreover, if literature is to be linked up with the other arts and with history, the school library must be well supplied with books of history, painting, sculpture, architecture, music.

A school library should be worthily housed in pleasant and dignified quarters. It should be accessible, as far as possible, to the whole school, and for as large a portion of every day as can be arranged. Restrictions in the borrowing of books should be few, though it may be desirable in some cases to have a separate library for the lower forms. In a large school it is practicable to maintain a really high literary standard for the main library; light literature and the merely ephemeral can be relegated to form libraries or house libraries. If the staff of the school includes a really competent librarian, it is best to give him considerable freedom in the choice of books, and in the framing of devices to catch readers, which are far more important than regulations for the protection of books. But the co-operation of the staff and of the senior boys or girls is very desirable: of the staff, to suggest the books wanted in different departments, to set the example of using the library, and to show the school how to use it; of the senior pupils, to assist in the duties of librarianship and to give books when they leave the school. It is a good plan to have a list of *Libri Desiderati* rather than to

depend on the casual tastes of donors. Collections of manuscripts and early printed books, Shakespeare facsimiles, autograph letters, portraits and other relics of famous men and women, a special shelf for new books and an annotated list of recent additions, are amongst the methods by which the attractiveness and influence of a school library may be increased.

304. Further points which may be emphasized are :— (1) the importance of encouraging the habit of reading by making the library an inviting haven of refuge for quiet mental refreshment; (2) the value of a supply of the best current literature as a help to the formation of taste; (3) the usefulness of reading societies, and of literary, debating, and dramatic clubs, organised in connection with the library.

Lastly, in making provision for the needs of the pupils, those of the teacher should not be overlooked. The teacher should always remain a student. Education Authorities should do their utmost to encourage and help him to remain one by making it easy for him to obtain the books he needs. Valuable help of this kind is given by a Voluntary Association known as the Students' Central Library. London and the great towns have their special opportunities, but the need is great in country districts. But whether in country or town, there are few ways in which Authorities can do more to raise the intellectual level of their schools than by organizing means for teachers to satisfy the taste for good reading which a liberal education should have given them.

V.—SOME POSSIBLE DANGERS IN READING.

305. It is very generally recognised that reading may be harmful as well as beneficial—that while good literature may be good for the young, bad literature may have a "demoralising" effect. This apprehension is common among parents and teachers, but their view of the matter

is not always a clear one: the prevailing rules of law, whether public or private, are not based upon scientific principles, they aim at the preservation of discipline and the avoidance of discomfort rather than at the guidance of the young reader through the period of rapid and inevitable growth. Moreover, the elements of the problem are not understood, and two very different dangers are confused together.

All reading is experience—an indirect form of experience, but a peculiarly powerful one, and for many minds the most varied and fruitful in the whole of life. The ordinary human destiny consists of playing, fighting, marrying, managing a household, bringing up children, pursuing a lifelong vocation. All these are experience, but of a kind tending more towards habit than reflection. Book reading cannot replace these acts, but it can add almost infinitely to their effect upon character. If then we are to read at all—and it is now thousands of years since man neither read literature nor heard it—there can be no doubt of the importance of a choice in what we read.

306. The deliberation, to begin with, must take account of a difference between two kinds of experience, one bringing us into contact with facts, the other with the human mind. The experience we gain may be information-experience or character-experience. The latter of these is by far the more potent for good or ill, yet it is the former which the pastors and masters of childhood often regard with greater apprehension. Their fears are neither unnatural nor absurd. Children are born with an appetite for information, but, like their appetite for food, it may be healthy without being well regulated. An exclusive diet of adventures, as of apples, may be innutritious: with passions, as with wine, familiarity may come too soon, that is, before the complete and sane knowledge of maturity is possible; but these risks have probably been much exaggerated and the precautions taken against them are always being defeated by the natural curiosity of youth. The desire of young people to discover all that can be discovered about

sensations cannot be effectively repressed, it can only be prevented from becoming an obsession by leaving open the way of exploration, and by taking care at the same time that the discoveries shall be made under the guidance of right reason and right feeling. Some of the greatest books in the world have long been regarded as dangerous ground for the feet of youth. As Sir Walter Raleigh has said, our morality in these matters has been "made up of condemnation and avoidance and protest": we have had too little perception of the fact that the spirit makes its growth from what it feeds on, not from what it rejects, and falls into sickness rather by the weakness of its own power of assimilation than because of any deadliness in the food supplied by the common earth. Brute physical facts in a newspaper are far more more unwholesome than the same facts in the pages of Shakespeare or of Cervantes. In such books as these they are conveyed by the sanest of voices and set by the greatest of observers in their due place in human life; they are treated naturally, fearlessly and without self-consciousness, whereas in the police news the reader's mind is concentrated upon their criminal aspect and unhelped by any influence which could make for judgment or a sense of proportion.

307. It is not information, then, which is to be feared, but the character-experience which accompanies it, and the question becomes one of still greater importance when we remember that in anything which is not a mere colourless record there is imparted to the reader either an idea, or a movement of the mind favourable to an idea. Few influences in life are so subtle or so powerful as the invisible power of literature—what may be called the undertones of the printed voice. All who understand or appreciate what is properly described as literature will acknowledge this at once: but it is true in a wider sense. Any written words, whether in books or periodicals, which are the result of a formative process in the mind of the writer, must make in their own degree a formative impression upon the mind of the reader. If the reader's mind is the stronger the

impression will be slight, or very possibly negligible, but if the tablet to be impressed is soft and still undinted the mark made will be proportionately deeper and more lasting. And what is most important here is not merely the depth, but the outline or style of the impression. For an example, we may contrast the picture of human life as drawn by Tolstoy or Hardy in any of their novels with the trivial realism, equally removed from feeling and reflection, of the domestic scenes in the ephemeral novels which fill the bookshops to-day.

These books, whether sensational or sentimental, and whether feebly or crudely written, are generally regarded as harmless because they do not offend against the rule of propriety, but to admit or favour them and at the same time to exclude the work of greater writers is a *reductio ad absurdum* of the principle of condemnation and avoidance: it is to entrust the care of youth to lower minds and to bar them from intercourse with those whose view of life is deepest and most virile. It is, moreover, a mere postponement of the inevitable, and in the meantime it sets up a false standard which ends by making freedom, when it comes, a misunderstood and furtive privilege. This is too high a price to pay for the avoidance of uncomfortable questions and possible aberrations from discipline.

308. Prohibition, then, is both futile and undesirable: but it does not follow that there is no remedy against the debilitating effect of vulgarity in print. Mental, like physical, contagion is best avoided by maintaining a vigorous health. The risk cannot be escaped, but it can be forestalled. We have in English an abundance of good literature interesting enough to arouse and satisfy the appetite of youth, and an abundant supply of it should be ready to hand in every school library. The taste of children is naturally good, and it is more than probable that if the first few years can be spent in good society the reader will have acquired the power of distinguishing between the better and worse companions, and will have formed a preference for the better. It is true that we have

to provide not only for normal appetites but for voracious habits. Children at the present day read more rapidly and continuously than did the children of two generations ago. The spectacle of life is thrust more violently upon them, and their curiosity is therefore more active and more various. The aspect of the world, too, changes more rapidly than of old, and fresh forms of life and activity cannot be explored to the reader's satisfaction without fresh books written expressly to deal with them. It is important that this need should be met by the provision of an ample supply of new books and new periodicals of the right kind. It is not necessary or desirable that writers, however skilled, should undertake the production of a new series of "moral tales." The first condition of success is that we should act up to our own tastes and offer to the young nothing which is not in some degree a work of art, the sincere expression of the writer himself. All we can do here is to be constantly on the look out for the appearance of sincere and attractive writers; and there is in fact no good reason to apprehend their extinction. To meet the demand for information, for adventures on the simplest terms, for pictures of school and boyhood, and in general for stories which reflect life but make no attempt to turn it into literature, something more may be done and is, in fact, being done. The fear that the children of to-day are being demoralised or exposed to evil suggestion by the penny stories and penny magazines which they devour in such large quantities is, in our belief, a mistaken one. We have examined for the purpose of this inquiry a number of the most popular of these productions, and have found some of them surprisingly well conceived and well written. Such publications as *The Children's Newspaper* and *My Magazine* are, in their own way, excellent, and attractive enough in themselves to need no recommendation from authority. Others which are more definitely written down to the children are yet comparatively harmless. It is true that we have discovered below these a stratum of very different matter, where stories of crude sensa-

ionalism are told in a jargon of degrading slang, but this stuff does not appear to be popular among children : only a single instance has come to our knowledge of a schoolboy being injuriously affected by it, and the circumstances were unusual—the books were picked up by accident in a heap of waste paper.

309. The position then, as we see it, is this. In the general opinion a certain value is assigned to literature, but as a nation we are still far from understanding its real nature and power. Conventionality and timidity hamper us in our choice and weaken still further our belief in the strongest of all our resources, and therefore our ability to use it successfully. Moreover, as we have stated elsewhere, our preparation for the teaching of literature has hitherto been inadequate and mistaken. There are many among our teachers who are not trained as they should be if they are to do the best that can be done with this particular means of education. To teach the structure and the practical uses of a language like English—a language at once living and classical—demands not less understanding, skill and enthusiasm than to teach any one of the sciences in theory and practice. Further, it is a primary necessity that those who are to introduce children to the great humanity of poetry, history and romance, with all the philosophy of life involved in them, should themselves already have attained some degree of intimacy with creative minds, and be able to speak of their work not in the letter but in the spirit. Our practical policy will be to secure this intimacy for the teacher and this introduction for the child, and we may be certain that if we can do this the dangers of print, which cannot be eliminated, will be more and more easily repelled, as the germs of disease are repelled by vigorous health.

VI.—THE READING OF THE BIBLE.

310. The view of English literature and its position in a national system of education which has been set forth in

this Report suggests a number of corollaries ; among them one of the most obvious would naturally deal with the reading of the Bible. We have three plain facts before us. First, the Authorised Version, though a translation from an eastern original, is a true part of English literature —has indeed, been fitly described as " the most majestic thing in our literature and the most spiritually living thing we inherit." Second, it is historically true that for five centuries and more no other English book has been so widely read in this island or so closely connected with our national life, or has left so strong a mark upon the mass of our literature. Third, at the present time the Bible is probably less widely read and less directly influential in our life and literature than it has been at any time since the Reformation. On such premises as these it might seem easy to base a recommendation.

But the matter is not, in fact, a simple one : out of the very same premises a special difficulty arises. All great literature is a spiritually living thing ; the Bible is not only, as has been said, the most spiritually living thing we inherit, but for centuries it has been held by great numbers of our people to be " spiritually living " in a special and exclusive sense. Two feelings have therefore been prevalent concerning the Bible as a means of education. On the one hand, it has been held too sacred in character to be lawfully treated as " mere literature " : on the other hand, it has been regarded as a canon of revealed truth, requiring an interpretation which has been the subject of dispute and division between religious sects. Its use in schools has therefore been restricted and even perverted. In Elementary Schools, whether provided or non-provided, it has been regarded only as a book of religion, and its use outside the period set apart for religious instruction has become in practice difficult or unusual. Away from school it is rapidly ceasing to be read. Among the causes which have led to this, one is probably the increasing prevalence of mechanical views of the Universe, and another, and more potent one, is that the introduction of national educa-

tion has led parents in increasing numbers to disinterest themselves in the education of their children and consequently to discontinue a share in it which generally included in old days the custom of Bible reading. Attendance at church where lessons from the Bible are read and Psalms are sung, has also become less regular in all classes. Reading is no doubt more common; we are on the way to becoming a reading nation; but we are continually less and less familiar with the one great piece of literature which for centuries gave something of a common form, a common dignity, to the thought and speech of the people

311. It is evident, then, that the difficulties in our way are formidable; they are, on the one hand, feeling and belief, on the other hand, disbelief and indifference. Yet the objections on this side and on that are not insuperable; and against them must be weighed the greatness of the educational advantages of which they are depriving us. We have urged in our General Introduction that our national education should be built up of literature and science, and that by an obvious necessity English should be taken first, —the language as the only foundation upon which in this country all else can be built, the literature as the best initiation into human experience and the only all-embracing record of it. When we go further and imagine in detail the process of bringing such a plan into operation we cannot but be struck by the necessity of regaining from the outset the use of one of our most valuable resources. The power of the Bible upon our language, our literature, our national life and thought, has been lost sight of because the possibility has not hitherto been imagined that a liberal education may be and should be, not only a gift within the reach of every child, but the very gift purposed by the State in undertaking the elementary training of its citizens. From the moment when this is admitted it will be seen to be no longer possible to deprive our schools of the free and impartial study of the Bible. If we set aside, as we do with any other classic, all consideration of its bearing upon dogmatic religion, there can be no division

of opinion as to its historical position and effect in this country. Upon this point a member of our committee, Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, has written at some length in his volume of lectures on *The Art of Reading*, and we here adopt and incorporate some passages from his book. "I shall ask you first," he writes, "to assent with me, that the Authorised Version of the Holy Bible is as a literary achievement one of the greatest in our language; nay, with the possible exception of the complete Works of Shakespeare, the very greatest. You will certainly not deny this. As little, or less, will you deny that more deeply than any other book—more deeply even than all the Writings of Shakespeare—far more deeply—it has influenced our literature." He then quotes "some few glorious sentences such as:

Thine eyes shall see the King in his beauty: they shall behold the land that is very far off.

And a man shall be as a hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. . . .

So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality . . . . "

He goes on as follows:—"When a nation has achieved this manner of diction, these rhythms for its dearest beliefs, a literature is surely established. Wyclif, Tyndale, Coverdale and others before the forty-seven,* had wrought. The Authorised Version, setting a seal on all, set a seal on our national style. It has cadences homely and sublime, yet so harmonises them that the voice is always one. Simple men—holy and humble men of heart like Izaak Walton and Bunyan—have their lips touched and speak to the homelier tune. Proud men, scholars—Milton, Sir Thomas Browne—practise the rolling Latin sentences; but upon the rhythms of our Bible they, too, fall back—'The great mutations of the world are acted, or time may be too short for our designs.' 'Acquaint thyself with the Choragium of the stars.' 'There is nothing

* The Committee who made the Authorised Version.

immortal but immortality.' The precise man Addison cannot excel one parable in brevity or in heavenly clarity; the two parts of Johnson's antithesis come to no more than this 'Our Lord has gone up to the sound of a trump; with the sound of a trump our Lord has gone up.' The Bible controls its enemy Gibbon as surely as it haunts the curious music of a light sentence of Thackeray's. It is in everything we see, hear, feel, because it is in us, in our blood."

312. To this we may add a passage from Matthew Arnold containing a striking reflection upon the difference between the Hebrew scriptures and all the other classics or the World's literature :—

"The effect of Hebrew poetry can be preserved and transferred in a foreign language as the effect of other great poetry cannot. The effect of Homer, the effect of Dante, is and must be in great measure lost in a translation, because their poetry is a poetry of metre, or of rhyme, or both; and the effect of these is not really transferable. A man may make a good English poem with the matter and thoughts of Homer and Dante, may even try to reproduce their metre, or rhyme: but the metre and rhyme will be in truth his own, and the effect will be his, not the effect of Homer or Dante. Isaiah's, on the other hand, is a poetry, as is well known, of parallelism; it depends not on metre and rhyme, but on a balance of thought, conveyed by a corresponding balance of sentence; and the effect of this *can* be transferred to another language . . . . . Hebrew poetry has in addition the effect of assonance and other effects which cannot perhaps be transferred; but its main effect, its effect of parallelism of thought and sentence, can."

This criticism is not merely technical; it points to something beyond technique. The acceptability to our people through so many generations of the rhythm or "balance of thought" of the Hebrew writers has no parallel in our experience. It would seem that there is a singular natural resemblance in mind and expression between this

one Oriental and this one Western people. For it must be remembered that the origin of the Authorised Version is the Wyclif Bible, in which many of its cadences are already traceable in spite of the obsolescent inflections of fourteenth century English and in spite of the fact that the older work was a translation through the Vulgate and not from the Hebrew direct. This natural resemblance or affinity of mind, which has enabled the masterpieces of one literature to reappear as masterpieces in another, is evidently for us a gift without a parallel, and one not for a moment to be left unused.

313. It has been used hitherto. The effect has been as unique as the instrument. The evidence which we have already quoted bears mainly on the influence of the Bible upon great English writers; but both directly and indirectly the influence has gone further than this. It has gone down into the emotional life of the nation and has been effectual in a thousand ways in the words, thoughts, and instinctive actions of that life. To quote again from Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch :—

"These cadences, these phrases have for three hundred years exercised a most powerful effect . . . . by association of ideas, by the accreted memories of our race enwrapping connotation around a word, a name—say the name *Jerusalem*, or the name *Sion* :

> And they that wasted us, required of us mirth, saying,—
> Sing to us one of the songs of Sion.
> How shall we sing the Lord's song, in a strange land?

If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning!

"It must be known to you, Gentlemen, that these words can affect men to tears who never connect them in thought with the actual geographical Jerusalem ; who connect it in thought merely with a quite different native home from which they are exiles. Here and there some one man may feel a similar emotion over Landor's.

> Tanagra, think not I forget . . . .

But the word Jerusalem will strike twenty men twentyfold more poignantly : for to each it names the city familiar in

spirit to his parents when they knelt, and to their fathers before them : not only the city which was his nursery and yet lay just beyond the landscape seen from its window ; its connotation includes not only what the word ' Rome ' has meant, and ever must mean, to thousands on thousands setting eyes for the first time on *The City :* but it holds, too, some hint of the New Jerusalem, the city of twelve gates before the vision of which St. John fell prone :

> Ah, my sweet home, Hierusalem,
> Would God I were in thee !
> Thy Gardens and thy gallant walks
> Continually are green :
> There grows such sweet and pleasant flowers
> As nowhere else are seen.
> Quite through the streets with pleasant sound
> The flood of Life doth flow;
> Upon whose banks on every side
> The wood of Life doth grow . . .

" You cannot get away from these connotations, accreted through your own memories and your fathers' ; as neither can you be sure of getting free of any great literature in any tongue, once it has been written."

This judgment is supported by a passage from Cardinal Newman :—

" How real a creation, how *sui generis,* is the style of Shakespeare, or of the Protestant Bible and Prayer Book, or of Swift, or of Pope, or of Gibbon, or of Johnson !

" Even were the subject matter without meaning, though in truth the style cannot really be abstracted from the sense, still the style would, on *that* supposition, remain as perfect and original a work as Euclid's *Elements* or a symphony of Beethoven.

" And, like music, it has seized upon the public mind : and the literature of England is no longer a mere letter, printed in books and shut up in libraries, but it is a living voice, which has gone forth in its expressions and its sentiments into the world of men, which daily thrills upon our ears and syllables our thoughts, which speaks to us through our correspondents and dictates when we put pen to paper. Whether we will or no, the phraseology of Shakespeare,

of the Protestant formularies, of Milton, of Pope, of Johnson's Table-talk, and of Walter Scott, have become a portion of the vernacular tongue, the household words of which perhaps we little guess the origin, and the very idioms of our familiar conversation . . . . So tyrannous is the literature of a nation; it is too much for us. We cannot destroy or reverse it . . . . We cannot make it over again. It is a great work of man, when it is no work of God's. . . . We cannot undo the past."

"If that be true," (Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch's conclusion follows inevitably), "or less than gravely overstated: if the English Bible hold this unique place in our literature; if it be at once a monument, an example and (best of all) a well of English undefiled, no stagnant water, but quick, running, curative, refreshing, vivifying; may we not agree, Gentlemen, to require the weightiest reason why our instructors should continue to hedge in the temple and pipe the fountain off in professional conduits, forbidding it to irrigate freely our ground of study?"

314. For these reasons we desire that in all the schools of the country, Elementary as well as Secondary, the reading of the Bible should not be confined to the time set apart for Religious Instruction, but that its claim upon the time devoted to English studies should also be recognised. If any difficulty is felt in using the Bible itself in this way, we suggest that it may be avoided by the use of books of literary extracts in which selected passages from the Bible find a place beside other examples of great literature.

CHAPTER X.

SUMMARY OF PRINCIPAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

GENERAL.

1 That our national education needs to be perfected by being scientifically refounded as a universal, reasonable, and liberal process of development ... ... §9

2 That for such an Education the only basis possible is English ... ... §§9, 13

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS.

3 That every teacher is a teacher *of* English because every teacher is a teacher *in* English, and that the whole of the Time Table is therefore available for the teaching of English ... ... §64

4 That speech training must be undertaken from the outset and should be continued all through the period of schooling ... §66

5 That it is the business of the Elementary School to teach all its pupils to speak standard English, and that the scientific method of doing this is to associate each sound with a phonetic symbol ... ... §67

6 That the schools should not aim at the suppression of dialect, but at making the children bi-lingual ... ... §69

7 That there should be no abrupt break between the methods of the Infant School and those of the Senior School ... ... §73

8 That oral work is the foundation upon which proficiency in the writing of English must be based ... ... §75

9 That full use should be made of the powers of any teacher who has a special aptitude for teaching Composition ... ... §82

10 That children should be practised, not only in the art of speaking and reading, but also in the art of listening ... ... §87

11 That when the recognition and use of the symbols have been mastered, the lesson should be called "Literature" rather than "Reading" ... ... §87

12 That if literature is to be enjoyed by the children it must be entrusted to teachers with a love of it ... ... §89

PREPARATORY SCHOOLS.

13 That in order to render possible the provision of the necessary basis of English teaching, the study of classical and foreign languages should be postponed till later than at present ... ... §98

14 That some acquaintance with English literature should precede the introduction to foreign and classical literatures ... ... §100

15 That English should be used as a sifting ground, to differentiate those possessed of literary ability ... ... §101

16 That Public Schools Scholarship Examinations should not encourage specialisation in other subjects to the detriment of English ... §102

17 That the sounds of spoken English should be scientifically taught ... ... §103

SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

18 That time might be saved in the study both of Classics and of Modern Languages (including English) by the adoption of a uniform grammatical terminology; and in Composition by the exacting of a high literary

standard in written answers to questions in History, Geography, &c. ... ... §110

19 That in Junior Departments, up to the age of 12, at least one period a day should be devoted to English ... ... §111

20 That the pupil should be made familiar with a body of fine poetry, of value not only for its own sake, but for its uses for comparison and illustration through the later work ... §116

21 That during the period 14–16 the study of English should not be subordinate to that of Science or of foreign languages ... ... §118

22 That during the period 16–18 some study of the growth and development of the English language would be preferable to a course in Old English ... ... §120

23 That in the teaching of literature reference should be made to the other creative arts, in order that the broad principles of criticism may be properly illustrated ... §122

24 That care should be taken to insist on the accurate use of the English language by pupils specialising in Mathematics or Science §124

25 That a combination of Latin (or Greek) with English and History might well be made permissible as an additional Advanced Course* ... ... §125

26 That the question of admitting English as an optional main subject in any of the Advanced Courses should receive serious consideration ... ... §125

27 That throughout the Public Schools English Literature should be regarded as entitled to a place in the regular school course, and not be relegated to spare time ... ... §127

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* This is now sanctioned in the Regulations for Secondary Schools dated 13 Sept., 1921.

28 That the Senior Teacher of English should be allowed the same powers of direction as are usually given to the Senior Teacher in Mathematics, Science, or Modern Languages §129

29 That in the teaching of literature the scientific ideal and the ideal of human interest should not be thought of as opposed ... ... §131

ENGLISH IN COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL LIFE.

30 That " the needs of business " are best met by a liberal education ... ... §134

31 That " Commercial English " is objectionable to all who have the purity of the language at heart, and also unnecessary ... ... §136

EVENING CONTINUATION SCHOOLS.

32 That in Junior Evening Courses the study of English should be broadly interpreted, and should be related to the vocation and environment of the student without excluding the intellectual and emotional appeal of literature ... ... §§140, 141

DAY CONTINUATION SCHOOLS.

33 That the teaching of the humanities in these schools must rest almost entirely upon English ... ... §143

34 That local history, adapted to the needs of adolescent students, should be studied, not as an end in itself, but as an introduction to the history and literature of the nation ... §144

35 That the development of the power to make lucid statements demands particular attention in this type of education ... ... §146

36 That each school should have a lending library, and in stocking it regard should be had to the tastes of the adolescent wage-earner ... §147

37 That reading aloud, recitation, and dramatic performance are the most effective methods of dealing with literature in school, especially in the Continuation School ... ... §148

COMMERCIAL AND TECHNICAL SCHOOLS.

38 That what is required is not so much non-vocational classes in the Technical Schools as more English in the vocational classes ... §150

39 That those responsible for technical and commercial education should urge upon their students the advantages, vocational as well as cultural, of the pursuit of humane studies §151

40 That courses of instruction in the humanities should be arranged for teachers in Evening and Technical Institutes ... ... §152

41 That English itself, even literature, can and should be made to bear directly upon the life and work of all those who study it ... §156

42 That a humanised industrial education is the chief means whereby the breach between culture and the common life of man may be healed ... ... §158

THE TRAINING OF TEACHERS.

43 That Local Education Authorities employing Supplementary Teachers should provide classes for them with a view to rendering them more competent as teachers of English ... ... §§162–164

44 That it is desirable that the standard in English required for admission to Training Colleges should be raised, and that the student-teacher year forms a regrettable interruption to the general education of the intending teacher ... ... §168

45 That the Syllabus in English for the Final Examination of students in Training Colleges should indicate that Reading, Recitation and Phonetics are essential features of the study of English... ... ... §172

46 That throughout the two years' course students should devote an hour weekly to Phonetics and speech training; that increased attention should be paid in the Training Colleges to spoken English; that an oral test should form an essential part of the examination in English; and that a compulsory "language" test should be included ... §§174, 175

47 That an examination on a compulsory syllabus of set books in Literature does not meet the needs of a number of the students who take the Ordinary Course in the Final Examination in English ... ... §180

48 That students taking the Advanced Course should be encouraged to read outside the prescribed scheme; that the Advanced Course Syllabus should recognise the study of contemporary literature; and that in the examination for this Course a "language" paper is needed and that an oral test is specially important ... ... §§182, 183

49 That Training Colleges should encourage selected students to make a special study of English in a Third year Course ... ... §184

50 That it is desirable that a larger proportion of elementary school teachers should have completed a full University training ... §186

51 That dangers are attached to the attempt to compress within two years both a "Degree Course" and a professional training ... §186

52 That steps should be taken to render Training College lectureships more attractive ... §187

53 That Local Education Authorities should promote and assist classes in English for teachers on lines similar to those of the courses organised at Oxford by the Board of Education, and in London by the London County Council ... ... §189

54 That Local Education Authorities should establish Central Libraries for teachers ... §189

THE UNIVERSITIES.

55 That in all University examinations the quality of the English written or spoken by candidates should carry great weight ... §192

56 That in every University, "Schools" of English Language and Literature should rank as at least the equal of any Arts "School" ... ... §193

57 That the experiment might be tried of two successive "Schools" of English, viz., an English "Moderations" based on a study of pure literature and of the language necessary for its complete understanding, and an English "Literæ Humaniores" based on English History and Philosophy ... §196

58 That a candidate for Honours in a Classical "School" should be given opportunities of illustrating his studies of the Classics by their English parallels or derivatives ... §197

59 That corresponding encouragement should be given to candidates for Honours in "Schools" of English to show a knowledge of the relation between English literature and the classical literatures ... ... §198

60 That, whether in addition to, or in substitution for, the Classics, credit should be given to candidates for English Honours who show knowledge of one or more foreign literatures so far as they are related to English literature ... ... §199

61 That in a "School" of Honours in English Literature, weight should be given to knowledge both of Anglo-Saxon and pre-Chaucerian English literature, and of the "Mediterranean" literatures; and that all candidates should be expected to show some knowledge of at least one of these "sources" of English literature ... ... §200

62 That before the post-graduate period English language should be taught on humane lines, philology and phonetics occupying a subordinate place ... ... §203

63 That philology should be a predominantly post-graduate study and a recognised avenue to the Doctorate ... ... §205

64 That the normal English "School" should be one comprising both Literature and Language ... ... §207

65 That candidates for Honours in English should not be compelled to take Anglo-Saxon, but allowed to offer as alternatives Middle French or Mediæval Latin ... §§209, 210

66 That Pass "Schools" in English should be established by all Universities ... ... §211

67 That English should be a qualifying subject in all matriculation examinations ... ... §211

68 That in the awarding of Entrance Scholarships to the Universities English is at a disadvantage compared with other subjects, and that it is essential that its importance should be recognised ... ... §§213, 214

69 That endowment for post-graduate work in English is also needed ... ... §216

70 That the thesis is a valuable supplement to the ordinary examination method, even at the B.A. stage ... ... §217

71 That research in the sense of literary or linguistic exploration should not be under-

taken before the D.Litt. or new Ph.D. stage, in order that the necessary knowledge and training may be first acquired ... ... §219

72 That for post-graduate research work the smaller and less adequately equipped and staffed Universities should specialise in certain appropriate branches of English; and that the research student should be able to proceed to the University in which he will find the materials he requires ... §221

73 That a Standing Committee should be appointed to co-ordinate the various stages of research in English and the degrees awarded, and to promote the most advantageous use of the great libraries and other storehouses of materials for literary investigation ... ... §221

74 That, if the exportation of early printed books and manuscripts cannot be prevented, the deposit, in the principal libraries of the United Kingdom, of photographic facsimiles of them should be made compulsory ... §222

75 That provision should be made for instruction in Bibliography in every University where research work in English is undertaken ... §223

76 That an additional provision of Readerships, Fellowships and Lectureships in English is required ... ... §229

77 That courses or single lectures by specialists not on the academic staff should be encouraged by the allocation of sums of money for the purpose to the English Departments of every University ... ... §230

78 That Extension and Tutorial Classes in English should be regarded as an integral part of the English Department ... ... §230

79 That the endowment of an English Chair should be at least equal to that of any other humanistic Chair in the same University ... §231

LITERATURE AND ADULT EDUCATION.

80 That much can be done in the way of propaganda and missionary work on behalf of English by University Professors of English and their staffs ... ... §238

81 That the co-operation which exists in London between the Local Education Authority and the University for providing an opportunity for the study of English after working hours might well be reproduced in other large centres ... ... §243

82 That the University Extension system is of great value in promoting interest in English literature, and that the provision of first-rate lecturers should be encouraged by means of fixity of tenure, Fellowships and Pensions ... ... §248

83 That the growth of an interest in literature among students attending Workers' Educational Association classes depends on their being brought to realise the connection between literature and life ... ... §250

GRAMMAR.

84 That the grammar taught in schools should be *pure* grammar (*i.e.*, a grammar of function, not of form) and that such teaching should be closely allied with phonetics §§264, 265

85 That the terminology used should be that recommended in the Report of the Joint Committee on Grammatical Terminology... §264

86 That no attempt should be made to teach "English" grammar as distinct from

"pure" grammar, and that the forms and functions peculiar to synthetic languages should not be introduced ... ... §264

87 That the means relied on for teaching correct speech should be the correction of mistakes as they arise, the great power of imitation, and (at a later stage) the teaching of the general rules to which our standard speech conforms ... ... §265

ENGLISH AND EXAMINATIONS.

88 That the examination system should be applied as widely as possible to the power of "communication" in English ... ... §267

89 That examinations in English for scholarships to Secondary Schools should be tests of this power rather than tests in grammar, analysis and spelling ... ... §270

90 That in the First School Examination a test of power to grasp the meaning of a given passage of appropriate difficulty should be compulsory ... ... §272

91 That similarly in the Second School Examination all candidates should be tested in the understanding and use of English, either by an essay, or by other tests, or in both ways §273

92 That in University Scholarship Examinations candidates should not be allowed to sacrifice competency in the use of English to the attainment of a high standard of achievement in other subjects ... ... §273

93 That an examination on set books should leave the teacher of literature as free as possible to draw up his own syllabus and adopt his own methods ... ... §278

94 That both at the School Certificate and the Higher Certificate stages questions of a suitable kind on General Literature might

with advantage be included as well as questions on prescribed books or a prescribed period ... ... §279

95 That oral examination should be resorted to more frequently ... ... §283

THE DRAMA.

96 That as soon as children are old enough they should attempt to dramatise familiar ballads, stories or fairy tales, or famous historical incidents; and that schools in districts where a genuine dialect survives should make use of any traditional fragments of old folk plays ... ... §§285, 289

97 That the reading and acting of plays should be encouraged in schools of all types and in Training Colleges ... ... §§292-294

98 That Universities should seriously consider the possibility of granting a Diploma in Dramatic Art, similar to the Diploma in the Humanities, to students who have followed an approved course ... ... §295

99 That lectureships on the Art of the Theatre, similar to that established at Liverpool, and also Chairs in Dramatic Literature, might well be established at other Universities ... ... §295

BOOKS AND LIBRARIES.

100 That nothing is more vital for the spread of good literature than the supply of good editions of standard authors at a moderate cost ... ... §299

101 That co-operation between the Public Library Committee and the Local Education Committee is of great importance ... ... §301

102 That every Elementary School should possess its own library ... ... §302

103 That in Secondary Schools the provision of a good library is at least as important as the provision of a good laboratory ... ... §303

104 That Education Authorities should do their utmost to assist teachers to obtain the books they require ... ... §304

THE READING OF THE BIBLE.

105 That in all schools the reading of the Bible should not be confined to the time set apart for Religious Instruction, but that its claim upon the time devoted to English studies should also be recognised ... ... §314

HENRY NEWBOLT, *Chairman.*
JOHN BAILEY.
K. M. BAINES.
FREDERICK S. BOAS.
H. M. DAVIES.
D. ENRIGHT.
C. H. FIRTH.
J. H. FOWLER.
L. A. LOWE.
ARTHUR QUILLER-COUCH.
GEORGE SAMPSON.
CAROLINE F. E. SPURGEON.
G. PERRIE WILLIAMS.
J. DOVER WILSON.

J. E. HALES, *Secretary.*
23rd April, 1921.

APPENDICES.

APPENDIX I.

LIST OF WITNESSES EXAMINED BY THE COMMITTEE.

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS.

Board of Education:

Mr. F. W. CAPE, H.M.I., Chief Examiner in English, Final Examination of Training Colleges.

Mr. E. K. CHAMBERS, C.B., Principal Assistant Secretary, Technological and Continuation Schools Branch (now Second Secretary).

Miss R. L. MONKHOUSE, H.M. Inspector of Training Colleges.

Mr. J. OWEN, H.M.I., Inspector and Adviser in English History and Economics to the Technological Branch.

Mr. C. J. PHILLIPS, H.M.I., Divisional Inspector, Elementary Branch.

Mr. T. W. PHILLIPS, H.M.I., Divisional Inspector, Secondary Branch.

Mr. H. M. RICHARDS, C.B., Chief Inspector, Elementary Branch.

Mr. F. H. SPENCER, H.M.I., Inspector and Adviser in relation to Commerce to the Technological Branch.

Mr. T. A. STEPHENS, H.M.I., Secondary Branch.

Mr. J. C. STOBART, H.M.I., Elementary Branch.

Mrs. M. WITHIEL, H.M.I., Secondary Branch.

Civil Service Commission:

Sir STANLEY LEATHES, K.C.B., First Commissioner.

EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS.

Association of Head Masters:

Rev. A. A. DAVID, D.D., Rugby School.
Mr. N. L. FRAZER, Grammar School, Ilkley.
Mr. E. SHARWOOD SMITH, Grammar School, Newbury.
Mr. R. F. CHOLMELEY, O.B.E., Owen's School, Islington.

Association of Head Mistresses:

Miss E. H. MAJOR, King Edward's High School, Birmingham (*President*).
Miss M. D. BROCK, Mary Datchelor Girls' School, Camberwell.
Miss R. M. HAIG-BROWN, Oxford High School.
Miss E. A. PHILLIPS, Clifton High School, Bristol.

Association of Preparatory Schools:

Mr. E. H. PARRY.
Mr. H. WILKINSON.

Headmasters' Conference:

Rev. C. A. ALINGTON, D.D., Eton College
Mr. NOWELL SMITH, Sherborne School.

London Chamber of Commerce:

Mr. SIDNEY HUMPHRIES, Principal of City of London College.
Mr. J. H. POLAK, Deputy Chairman of the Commercial Education Committee.

Modern Language Association:

Mr. D. B. ANTHONY, Assistant Master, County Secondary School, Holloway.
Miss L. C. BREW, Headmistress, King Edward VI. Grammar School, Handsworth.
Mr. S. A. RICHARDS, Assistant Master, Hackney Downs School.

Parents' National Educational Union:

Miss E. A. PARISH, Organising Secretary.

Science Masters' Association :

Mr. W. J. Calvert, Harrow School.
Mr. W. D. Eggar, Eton College.
Mr. G. W. Hedley, Cheltenham College.

Standing Committee on Grammatical Reform :

Professor E. A. Sonnenschein, D.Litt. (*Chairman*).
Mr. Cloudesley Brereton, L. és L.
Miss F. M. Purdie.
Miss Edith Hastings (*Secretary*).

Training College Association :

Miss W. Mercier, Principal of Whitelands Training College (*President*).
Miss Ivatt, Whitelands Training College.
Miss Paine, Goldsmiths' Training College.
Rev. V. W. Pearson, Principal of Sheffield City Training College.
Miss K. T. Stephenson, Principal of St. Gabriel's Training College.
Miss Terry, Vice-Principal, Furzedown Training College.

University Tutorial Class Tutors' Association :

Mr. H. Clay.
Mr. G. E. Wilkinson.

Individual Witnesses.

Atkins, Professor J. W. H., Rendel Professor of English Language and Literature, University College of Wales, Aberystwyth.
Attenborough, Mr. F. L., Emmanuel College, Cambridge.
Ballard, Mr. P. B., D.Lit., District Inspector of Schools, London County Council.
Bamforth, Miss M. E., Head Mistress, St. James' Girls' and Infants' School, Exeter.
Barton, Mr. J. E., Headmaster, Bristol Grammar School.

BAWDEN, Miss A., Head Mistress, Bellenden Road Girls' School, Dulwich.

BESTON, Miss M. G., Head Mistress, Clifton Road Council School, Birmingham.

BOND, Professor R. WARWICK, Professor of English, University College, Nottingham.

CHADWICK, Professor H. M., Elrington and Bosworth Professor of Anglo-Saxon in the University of Cambridge.

CHAMBERS, Mr. R. W., D.Lit., Reader in English Language and Literature in the University of London.

COOK, Mr. H. CALDWELL, Assistant Master, Perse School, Cambridge.

CRU, Dr. ROBERT L., Director of the London Office, Office National des Universités françaises.

DARBISHIRE, Miss H., Somerville College, Oxford.

DAVIS, Miss G. M., Assistant Mistress, Central Foundation School, London.

DOWSE, Mr. GERALD, Senior English Master and Head of the Modern Side, Liverpool Collegiate School.

DOWSON, Mrs. (Miss Rosina Filippi).

DUNLOP, Miss M. V., late Assistant Mistress, King Edward's High School, Birmingham.

DUNN, Miss ESTHER CLOUDMAN, Bryn Mawr College, U.S.A.

FOGERTY, Miss ELSIE, Principal, Central School of Speech Training and Dramatic Art, Royal Albert Hall.

GOLLANCZ, Sir ISRAEL, Litt.D., Professor of English Language and Literature in the University of London.

GREG, Mr. W. W., Litt.D.

GRIERSON, Professor H. J. C., LL.D., Professor of Rhetoric and English Literature in the University of Edinburgh.

HARTOG, Mr. P. J., C.I.E., Academic Registrar of the University of London (now Vice-Chancellor of Dacca University, India).

HAWTREY, Miss M., Principal, Darlington Training College.

JONES, Mr. DANIEL, Reader in Phonetics, University of London.

JACOB, Miss M. S., Head Mistress, Trent Bridge Council School, Nottingham (Girls' Dept.).

KER, Professor W. P., LL.D., Quain Professor of English Language and Literature in the University of London; Professor of Poetry in the University of Oxford.

KIMMINS, Mr. C. W., D.Sc., Chief Inspector of Education, London County Council.

KING, Mr. BOLTON, Director of Education, Warwick County Council.

KITCHEN, Mr. P. I., Organiser of Further Education, Warwick County Council.

LAMBORN, Mr. E. A. GREENING, Head Master, East Oxford Council School.

LEE, Sir SIDNEY, LL.D., Litt.D., Professor of English Language and Literature and Dean of the Faculty of Arts in the University of London.

MAIS, Mr. S. P. B., late Professor of English at the R.A.F. Cadet College, Cranwell, Lincolnshire.

MAWER, Professor ALLEN, Joseph Cowen Professor of English Language and Literature, Armstrong College, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

MORGAN, Professor A. E., Professor of English, University College, Exeter.

MORLEY, Professor EDITH J., Professor of English Language, University College, Reading.

MURRAY, Miss H. M. R., Girton College, Cambridge.

PALFERY, Mr. A. E., Principal Assistant, Education Officers' Department, London County Council.

PAUES, Miss A. C., Newnham College, Cambridge.

PHIPPS, Mr. W. T., Chief Education Officer, Kesteven County Council.

POCOCK, Mr. G. N., Assistant Master, Royal Naval College, Dartmouth.

RALEIGH, Sir WALTER, Merton Professor of English Literature in the University of Oxford.

SAINTSBURY, Professor G., LL.D., D.Litt., Emeritus Professor in the University of Edinburgh; formerly Professor of Rhetoric and English Literature.

SANSON, Miss G., Head Mistress, Bellenden Road Infants' School, Dulwich.

de SÉLINCOURT, Professor E., D.Litt. Professor of English Language and Literature, University of Birmingham.

SMITH, Mr. D. NICHOL, Goldsmiths' Reader in English, University of Oxford.

SMITH, Mr. G. HARBRON, Head Master, Uplands Council School, Stroud.

SMITH, Professor H. BOMPAS, Professor of Education, University of Manchester.

STEWART, Rev. F. H., D.D., Chairman of the Mediæval and Modern Languages Board, University of Cambridge.

SWEANEY, Miss A. M., Vice-Principal of the Cheshire County Training College, Crewe.

TAYLOR, Mr. J. R., Director of Humanistic Studies, Huddersfield Technical College.

WARDALE, Miss E. E., St. Hugh's College, Oxford.

WATKINS, Mr. STANLEY H., Ph.D., Lecturer in Education at University College, Cardiff; Hon. Secretary, S. Wales District of W.E.A.

WHITE, Mr. J. A., Head Master, Malmesbury Road Central School, Bow.

WILSON, Miss M. M., Organising Mistress in English in Secondary Schools under the West Riding of Yorkshire County Council.

WYATT, Mr. A. J., Christ's College, Cambridge; Staff Lecturer to the University Extension Syndicate

WYLD, Professor H. CECIL, B.Litt., Baines Professor of English Language and Philology in the University of Liverpool; now Merton Professor of English Language and Literature in the University of Oxford.

APPENDIX II.

A NOTE ON THE TEACHING OF THE MOTHER-TONGUE IN FRANCE.

1. Our terms of reference limit us to our own language and our own country, and we have therefore not felt ourselves authorised to include in the body of our Report an account of the teaching of the mother-tongue in France. We append, however, a brief reference to this subject, since we cannot refrain altogether from availing ourselves of the striking support which is afforded to our own claim for English by the successful struggle made by the national language and literature of France for recognition in the French system of education.

It is too often assumed that the French boy starts with an initial advantage of a natural gift of expression impossible to the English boy with his more reserved temperament. That there do exist certain temperamental differences cannot be disputed, but it is not always realised that the present conception in France of the rightful position of the native language is a development of comparatively recent growth. If complaint has been made of the lack of recognition given to English in our own educational system, we must remember that a precisely similar complaint was made in France prior to 1870. The period of unrest in secondary education, due to the clash between the old tradition and the new, was felt in France as in England. In France, it is true, the political and social events of the last century precipitated the break between the old Classical tradition of the education of a cultured *élite*, and the new conception of a democratic education as a preparation for life. But in all essentials the contending forces have been the same. The impulse to the new spirit in France was given by the Revolution, but it was not until 1880, under the direction of Jules Ferry, that the mother-tongue actually became the basis of the Secondary School Scheme. Even after this, the struggle between the modern side and the classical side continued, until the modern side emerged in 1902 on equal terms with the classical.

2. To-day the break is fairly complete. In the Classics prose composition tests have disappeared, to be replaced by translations into French. The Secondary Schools for Girls and the Free Primary Schools established in 1880 and 1882 show little influence of the older tradition, except that they have retained as an integral part of their system the oral teaching of the old Jesuit Schools. The feeling which impelled the final break may be summed up in the words of M. Liard, " Un enseignement national qui ne serait pas

résolument moderne par la substance et par l'esprit, ne serait-il pas simplement un anachronisme inoffensif ; il deviendrait un péril national."

For this reason—that France can show us how in a generation she has built her educational structure on the recognition of the mother-tongue as an indispensable instrument of national culture, and the only possible basis of a national democratic system—there is everything to gain from a close examination of the methods adopted by France in her application of this principle. It is, however, neither necessary nor possible here to do more than indicate briefly the general lines of development.

3. The highly centralised system under which Education is administered in France, makes it comparatively easy to see at a glance the exact relation which the native language and literature bear to the school curriculum and the methods adopted. One uniform plan, carefully thought out in all its details, governs the whole teaching of French, from the lowest to the highest stages. It is graduated to meet the requirements of every age, but any differences that occur are in degree only, not in kind. A perusal of ministerial instructions relating to the teaching of French clearly reveals the fundamental importance attached to its study, and the two-fold purpose which it is deemed to serve. It is considered not only as a means of developing the power of expression, both oral and written, by giving the child a thorough knowledge of the structure of the language, but it is looked upon also as an instrument of national culture and moral education.

In pursuance of this principle, French occupies a considerable part of the school time-table and the examination test. In the Elementary School it claims two hours a day ; in the preparatory sections of the Secondary School, from nine hours a week in the first year to seven hours in the last year. In the Secondary School (Boys), a Science specialist devotes five hours a week to French.

4. French permeates the whole scheme of study. Oral work plays a considerable part in the teaching of every subject, and in all examinations in every subject. Lucid and accurate expression thus becomes the concern not only of the teacher of French, but of every teacher in the school. The same may be said of written expression, for in all examinations, whether of a general or specialist character, there is a compulsory Essay paper to which from two to four hours are allotted according to the nature of the examination. In the specialist examination the subject set for the essay is closely connected with the candidate's special line of study. In examination papers in Greek and Latin the main test consists of translation into French, and considerable importance is attached to the form of the translation. There is an additional element which contributes to the maintaining of a high standard in expression. French

examination papers in any subject rarely contain more than one question, sometimes two, for which three hours are allowed.

The teacher of French co-ordinates his work as far as possible with that of other teachers. Science pupils, for instance, may have included, as part of their literature study, selections from writings of great scientists or the story of their lives.

During the first years of elementary instruction stress is laid on the development of the power of expression by reading and by various oral and written exercises, all most carefully graduated to suit the child. Speaking generally, the teaching of both language and literature forms one connected whole, with the "lecture expliquée," a distinctive French feature, as its instrument. The working of this method is as follows. A passage, prose or poetry, is chosen from the masterpieces of French literature, and carefully studied at home by the pupils. In elementary classes, easy selections are made, or simple stories from history or literature, in many cases from La Fontaine's Fables ; but in no school, even in the earliest stages, are detached isolated sentences chosen; every sentence is part of a story. In class, the whole passage is first read out. Any pupil is then called on to read and explain a section of the prepared passage. His accent, his expression in reading, his interpretation of the passage, are criticised by the other pupils at the teacher's invitation, and this is followed by the teacher's own explanation which deals with the author's thought, the relation of his ideas to contemporary currents of thought, his style, his choice of words, the relation of the phrases one to another in the construction of one harmonious whole, thus linking up the study of grammar with that of literature. This explanation varies, naturally, according to the class, being more elementary and simple in the earlier stages and more advanced in the highest classes. But in no case is there any abstract study of "periods" of literature. Literature is studied entirely from a first-hand knowledge of texts.

The literature syllabus is prescribed by the Central Authority, but each teacher is entitled to make his own choice of texts from the list submitted, and he is expected to make it in such a way that his pupils will be able to cover as wide a range as possible of the literature of their country during their school days.

5. There are no doubt various weaknesses inherent in the system here briefly outlined : severe critics of these have not been lacking in France, and acute controversies have raged over the question of methods. But the great interest of the system lies in the fact that we have here a conscious effort to give to every child a liberal education through the only medium which can reach the vast majority of the people—the mother-tongue ; to lead the child through the appreciation of the language and literature

of his race to the development of social consciousness and love of country.

The spirit which underlies the best literature teaching in France cannot be better expressed than in the words of Gustave Lanson. They indicate the ideal which is held before the teacher's eyes and which he at least strives to attain.

> " Il faut voir dans la littérature autre chose que le jeu frivole des fantaisies et des formes, c'est-à-dire des hommes qui disent ce qu'ils ont demandé à la vie, ce qu'ils ont rêvé de la vie, qui traduisent à leur façon, en beauté, en poésie, ce que d'autres ont traduit en lois, d'autres en actions, en bataille, en inventions industrielles, en effort commercial : le conflit éternel de l'homme et de la nature, l'âpre concurrence humaine, la lente évolution et les crises violentes des croyances morales et des organismes sociaux. Une œuvre littéraire est un aspect de l'humanité, un moment de la civilisation . . . on a le droit de regarder dans la littérature la vie qui s'y reflète et la gonfle, et d'y chercher les moyens de préparer des hommes à la vie."

APPENDIX III.

MEMORANDUM SUBMITTED BY MR. A. E. PALFERY ON THE SCHEME FOR THE CIRCULATION OF BOOKS IN LONDON ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS.

1. As the result of suggestion made at two Conferences held by the London County Council in 1906 and 1908 on the teaching of English in elementary schools, an experiment in the interchange of reading books was made in a few selected schools. By 1912, the experiment had been extended to 15 of the electoral areas into which London is divided. A report by the Inspectors of the Board of Education on the supply of books in London Schools (1913) stimulated the further extension of the scheme, which has now (May 1920) been brought into operation throughout the whole of the administrative county.

2. The scheme, in its present form, is under the control of the teachers themselves through the Local Consultative Committees of head teachers. In each of the 61 electoral areas, there are two of these Committees composed respectively of (a) the Headmasters, and (b) the Headmistresses of all schools in the area. In several areas, the two Committees, and here and there the Committees of adjacent areas, have combined for the administration of the scheme. Certain of the larger Consultative Committees have appointed for this purpose a small executive sub-committee. The total number of Local Committees for the administering of the scheme is 93.

As a first step in the application of the scheme to a group of schools, a catalogue was compiled of the books already in the possession of the schools in each area and deemed suitable for inclusion in the scheme. The books included were those commonly known in the schools as " Supplementary or Continuous Readers," that is to say, " story books "; text books, historical, geographical and science " readers," and poetry books were excluded. The catalogue, when completed, was typed by the Authority, and a copy sent to each school. Working with this catalogue in hand, Head Teachers furnished the local Committee with a list of the " sets " of the books they desired, giving alternatives in case their first choices were unobtainable owing to the demands of other schools. In order that the scheme might be fairly elastic the local Committee were authorised to requisition additional sets of books which appeared to be in general demand, and also additional copies to make up small sets to the size required by the schools which had asked for them. In the end a full list of the books assigned to each school, to meet its demands as far as possible,

was drawn up by the Committee, and on the warrant of this list the Authority provided the necessary transport to convey the books from school to school.

As a rule, exchanges are made twice yearly.

3. The average number of sets of books now in use is three per class in the upper classes and four per class in the lower classes, the books suited to the lower classes being as a rule shorter and more rapidly read. Individual schools are not limited to this number if additional books are available. When the total number of "sets" included in the area catalogue is insufficient to meet the needs of the schools, a requisition from the local Committee for further sets is certain of a favourable reception by the Authority. As most of the books supplied are suitable for use in more than one class, the number available for any class is considerably greater than the three or four allotted to it in the first instance.

In some areas, where a majority of schools have adopted a system of "sectional" teaching, "composite" sets have been formed, containing, say, ten copies of each of four books of similar standard, or six copies of eight titles, instead of a large number of copies of one book. By this means the variety of books available for each child is considerably increased.

Provision is made thus for the study of particular books by a class as a whole and at the same time for the study of others by individual scholars.

It is in the discretion of Head Teachers to allow books to be taken away for home reading.

4. In practice it has been found that the deterioration of the books is much less rapid than was anticipated. The reading habit fostered by the scheme has doubtless brought about a respect for books which leads to greater care being taken of them. When a set of books is certified by a local Committee to be no longer in fit condition for circulation, permission is given by the Authority for the set to be "written off." The books contained in that set may then, at the discretion of the Head Teacher concerned, be sold to the children at a small price, given away, or disposed of as waste paper. A certain number of the books included in the original catalogues have been found by experience to be lacking in interest, or too difficult, or otherwise unsuitable for reading in elementary schools. These have been withdrawn from the scheme, and in most cases it has been possible to transfer them with advantage to the loan collection of books for use in Evening Institutes. Provision has been made for the disinfection or, when necessary, the destruction of any books which have been handled by children found to be suffering from contagious or infectious diseases, and no trouble appears to have arisen from this source.

5. The general verdict of the Head Teachers upon the scheme is strongly in its favour. Some few schools which had accumulated an exceptionally good stock of books felt at first that they were being called upon to sacrifice their advantages to supply the deficiencies of others, and it is still sometimes complained that books which are particularly required to illustrate some portion of the schemes of work are not procurable at the time when they are most needed. Again, as the total number of sets in any area is only just sufficien to provide each school with its due quota, it may happen that sets for which a school has not asked have to be substituted for some of those demanded, and it is occasionally found that some of these are duplicates of those provided at the previous distribution.

6. The Authority has, however, done its best to remedy any cause of complaint of this character, and it is probable that these disadvantages will be reduced to a minimum as the distributing organisation is improved by experience and the selection of books for inclusion in the catalogues becomes more suited to the needs of the schools. In any case it would seem that such objections as are found are far outweighed by the immense gain in the scope of the reading matter now rendered available, by which there can be no doubt that the children have been very greatly benefited. It is certain also that the existence of the circulating scheme has enabled the London schools to surmount with a minimum of inconvenience the difficulties caused by the shortage of books during the war, and their greatly increased price. In this connection also it is interesting to note that, whereas in the first instance the scheme was applied to the upper standards only, it was soon realised by the various Committees of Head Teachers that it was equally valuable to the lower classes, and it is now applied to all classes in all areas.

7. There can be no doubt that great strides in the knowledge of English have been made during recent years by London Elementary Schools, an improvement which may be traced in great measure to the increased facilities for reading afforded by the scheme. This view is not merely one formed by inspectors from their visits to schools ; it is also the judgment of external examiners who are concerned with scholarship examinations.

A few figures will show the magnitude of the scheme :—

The number of departments connected with it is	1,776
The number of titles in circulation is approximately	1,650
The number of sets of books in circulation is approximately	40,000
The number of volumes in circulation is approximately	2,000,000

The books may be classified in three groups :—

A. Those in great and steady demand.
B. Those in moderate or irregular demand.
C. Those required only occasionally.

The following is a list of books in Class A, arranged in order of popularity : *Tales and Stories from Shakespeare, Robinson Crusoe, Arthurian Legends, Peter Pan, David Copperfield, Tale of Two Cities, Christmas Carol, Water Babies, Ivanhoe, Tales of Robin Hood, Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, Uncle Tom's Cabin, Treasure Island, Westward Ho! John Halifax, Gentleman, Tom Brown's Schooldays, Grimm's Fairy Tales, Arabian Nights, Andersen's Fairy Tales, Gulliver's Travels, Æsop's Fables, King of the Golden River, White Company, Coral Island, Mrs. Molesworth's Story of a Short Life, Children of the New Forest, Hereward the Wake, Oliver Twist, Stories from Chaucer, Micah Clarke, Kingsley's Heroes, Settlers in Canada, Granny's Wonderful Chair, Pickwick Papers, Silas Marner, Tales of the Fairies, Sindbad the Sailor, Old Greek Stories, Stories from Dickens, Black Arrow, Three Monkeys, Cranford, Deeds that Won the Empire, Sleeping Beauty, Aladdin, Stories from the Faerie Queene, Cinderella, Barnaby Rudge, Shackleton in the Antarctic, Story of Raleigh.*

APPENDIX IV.

MEMORANDUM SUBMITTED BY THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON GRAMMATICAL REFORM.

We, the undersigned members of the Standing Committee on Grammatical Reform, beg leave to call attention to the movement which we represent and to ask the Departmental Committee on English to take cognizance of it in its Report.

It is probable that the study of English in all its branches will occupy a central position in the educational schemes of the future for English speaking peoples: the need of a movement in this direction was emphasized by Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch in his address to the British Association (Educational Science Section) on the "Teaching of English" on September 9th last.

Now grammar is a study in which it is of prime and even vital importance to assign a central position to English. The concepts of grammar are best approached in connection with the mother-tongue; for grammar cannot be studied inductively when the concrete examples on which the rules are based are given in an unknown language. It is true that English suffers somewhat as a medium for teaching general grammar owing to its comparative poverty of inflexions. Nevertheless English grammar can be made to serve perfectly as a centre round which the grammars of other languages of our family may be grouped; for all the fundamental concepts of Indo-European grammar—including the notions of case, tense, and mood—can be sufficiently illustrated by English examples.

But English grammar loses much of its value as a gateway to the study of foreign tongues if it is expressed, as it generally is, in terms for which other terms are substituted in the case of every new language taken up; the resulting waste of time and brain-power produces in the learner discouragement and even disgust. To remedy this evil a Joint Committee* was called into existence in 1909, the object of which was to work out a common system

* Representing the Classical Association, The Modern Language Association, The English Association, The Incorporated Association of Head Masters, The Association of Head Mistresses, The Incorporated Association of Assistant Masters in Secondary Schools, The Incorporated Association of Assistant Mistresses in Public Secondary Schools, and The Association of Preparatory Schools.

of grammatical terminology, based on a common system of classification of grammatical facts, for the languages commonly studied in schools, viz.: English, Latin, French, German, and Greek. Copies of the report of this Joint Committee (issued in 1911) accompany our memorial.

The inconsistencies and contradictions found in the terminology of (say) Latin and French are, however, no greater than those which exist in different text-books of English grammar. The work of the Joint Committee has, it is true, resulted in the appearance of several English Grammars that adopt its recommendations; but there is still a lamentable amount of divergence among those in common use, the situation of English comparing very unfavourably in this respect with that of any other single language.

The Standing Committee now memorialising you was appointed in 1911 by the eight Associations named below, to carry on the work of the Joint Committee, which ceased to exist in that year after issuing its Report. Steps have already been taken by the Standing Committee to extend the principle of uniformity of terminology to Italian, Spanish, Dutch and Russian, and an Oriental Advisory Committee is now dealing with Sanskrit and the Sanskritic languages of India.

The Standing Committee is convinced that it is highly important to the nation that great efforts should be made to bring about the more rapid and successful acquirement of languages (especially living ones) in schools; and it is in the name of national economy of effort that we now venture to appeal to the Departmental Committee on English to give consideration to the importance of teaching the grammar of the mother-tongue in the manner that will best prepare for the learning of other languages.

To quote from the report of the American Joint Committee, which was appointed in December, 1911, with the same object as the English Joint Committee: "The situation, as we now have it, is wasteful from the point of view of accomplishment, pitiable from the point of view of the needless inflictions which it puts upon the unfortunate pupil, and absurd from the point of view of linguistic science. . . . A new language, a new set of terms! It is as if a student of mathematics, having mastered the common terms *addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, quotient,* and the like for arithmetic, had to learn to call the same things by new names when he came to algebra, and then by still different names when he came to physics. A system for high-school instruction more flatly opposed to the modern demand for efficiency could hardly be devised."

The Standing Committee regards the present time as favourable for a far-reaching reform. We have been greatly encouraged by the fact that the Government Committee on Modern Languages

has recently endorsed with its unmistakable approval the principles and methods for which we stand.

(Signed)

E. A. SONNENSCHEIN (representing The Classical Association), Chairman of the Standing Committee.
CLOUDESLEY BRERETON (representing The Modern Language Association).
R. M. HAIG BROWN (representing The Head Mistresses' Association).
HILDA M. R. MURRAY (representing The English Association).
J. S. NORMAN (representing the Association of Preparatory Schools).
W. E. P. PANTIN (representing The Assistant Masters' Association).
ELEANOR PURDIE (representing The Assistant Mistresses' Association).
FLORENCE M. PURDIE (co-opted).
W. G. RUSHBROOKE (representing the Head Masters' Association).
EDITH HASTINGS (co-opted), Hon. Sec. of the Standing Committee.

October, 1919.

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